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CHILDREN IN A DEMOCRACY

General Report Adopted by the
White House Conference
on Children in a Democracy

January 19, 1940
Washington, D. C.

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FOREWORD

The White House Conference on Children in a Democracy met for its second session in Washington, D. C., January 18 to 20, 1940. This session was the culmination of months of planning and preparation by the Planning Committee of 72 members, the Report Committee, the staff, and members of the Conference. Many members served as consultants to those responsible for the development of reports on various aspects of the relation between children and our American Democracy. Reports submitted in advance were reviewed by the entire membership, which had been somewhat augmented during the months between the initial session, April 26, 1939, and the January meetings, so that it now comprises 676 persons. Thus the Conference, organized at the suggestion of the President of the United States, was truly a citizens' enterprise, in which those representing many types of professional and civic interest, practical experience, and political and religious belief joined together to consider the aims of our American civilization for the children in whose hands its future lies.

The January sessions had but two aims—consideration of and action upon the reports prepared under the direction of the Report Committee, and discussion of the ways in which the Conference findings could be translated into action. The report presented herewith is the General Report adopted by the Conference after full consideration in group meetings and in general session. The Report Committee has followed faithfully the instructions of the Conference to incorporate in

the report the changes agreed to in the general session, in accordance with authority granted by the Conference in the following motion, which was adopted unanimously:

> *That the Conference adopt the report as amended, as a whole, subject to editorial changes by the Report Committee, and that the report be published as the General Report of the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy.*

The Report Committee was authorized also to prepare a final report, based on the General Report, the topical reports with suggestions as to their revision made in group meetings January 18 and in correspondence, and other material available to the committee. This final report will not be completed for some months. In the meantime the topical reports, with changes based on discussion in group meetings, will be made available for study and discussion.

As Chairman of the Conference and on behalf of the Planning Committee, I wish to acknowledge the great debt which the Conference owes to the Report Committee and its chairman, Homer Folks, the members of the Conference who have given so freely of their time and thought, and the Conference staff.

Frances Perkins,
Chairman.

PREFACE

The Report Committee, to which was entrusted the preparation of reports to be submitted to the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy, was appointed in March 1939, shortly after the organization of the Conference. This committee, of 27 persons, is widely representative of different professions and interests affecting the welfare of children, including medicine, public health, education, social service, child guidance, religion, public administration, agriculture, and general civic interests.

A modest fund having been placed at the disposal of the committee, it selected a research staff comprising the persons whose names are listed on page II. Under the leadership of Philip Klein, of the New York School of Social Work, who has served as research director, the staff prepared a series of documents on the several fields of interest within the scope of the Conference. Each document, containing factual material, opinions, suggestions, and recommendations, was submitted to a group of consultants with special experience and judgment in the subject. After revision in the light of these consultations the documents were submitted to the Report Committee for study, revision, and action.

On the basis of these statements and other material assembled by the staff, the Report Committee prepared a general conference report, which was submitted to the Conference at its meeting January 18. The recommendations in the report were discussed in groups meeting on the same day, and their suggestions for revision were reviewed by the Report Com-

mittee. The whole report, with changes approved by the committee, was considered, amended, and unanimously adopted by the Conference in general session January 19.

Great credit is due to the staff as a whole, and in particular to its director, for discriminative collection and summarizing of material, careful interpretation of subject matter, drafting of the topical statements and of the General Conference Report, and patient revision in the light of protracted discussions on the part of the Report Committee.

In addition to its own staff, the Report Committee received valuable help from staff members of various Federal bureaus and agencies, of whom some gave regular service for considerable periods. The experience, opinions, and conclusions of these Federal agencies having to do with one or another phase of the well-being of children, were freely placed at the disposal of the staff and the committee.

Special acknowledgment is due to the Chief and the members of the staff of the Children's Bureau, who were at all times at the service of the Conference. Without their continuous and able service the work of the Conference could not have been brought to a successful conclusion.

To the members of the Report Committee the chairman wishes to record his very sincere appreciation of their patience, deep interest, objectivity, and resourcefulness in arriving at a final group judgment on highly important subjects, often controversial in nature, in which in each case only a few of the Report Committee members were themselves expert. It is a notable tribute to their deep interest in the subject that in every instance full agreement was reached. The report as a whole stands as a product in the making of which every member of the committee had an equal responsibility. Clarity and conviction are furthered by the absence of minority reports.

The report contains 98 recommendations, which grew out of the experience and considered judgment of the staff, consultant groups, and members of the committee. It is submitted by the Conference to the American people in the hope that it may, in some degree, clarify the present situation of the children of America and stimulate increased interest and greater effort toward a more complete realization of the ideals of the American people for their children—the children of the American Democracy.

HOMER FOLKS,
Chairman of the Report Committee.

CHILDREN IN A DEMOCRACY

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The Goals of Democracy

THE WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE on Children in a Democracy, the fourth in a series of children's conferences held during the past 30 years, addresses itself to the interests of all the children of the Nation and to every aspect of child welfare, including home life, material security, education, health, and general preparation for the responsibilities of citizenship.

At the first meeting of the Conference on April 26, 1939, President Roosevelt said:

> *Democracy must inculcate in its children capacities for living and assure opportunities for the fulfillment of those capacities. The success of democratic institutions is measured, not by extent of territory, financial power, machines, or armaments, but by the desires, the hopes, and the deep-lying satisfactions of the individual men, women, and children who make up its citizenship.*

The people of the United States have talked and lived democracy for a century and a half. We have never felt that it has reached its full stature nor that it has operated satisfactorily in every field of human endeavor. We have not always agreed as to the exact meaning of democracy, but we have never lost our belief in certain fundamental democratic principles. These fundamentals include, above all, freedom of the individual as it is inscribed in our fundamental law, with its Bill of Rights assuring freedom of speech, press, religion,

and public assembly. While the individual is becoming less significant as a unit in our elaborate system of production and distribution, his worth and integrity remain the cornerstone of our democratic philosophy.

These principles we wish to preserve for our children, and we hope so to educate them that they may improve upon and transmit this heritage to coming generations.

The development of science and invention, and the growth of industry have created new and complex conditions, in which the freedom of the individual is endangered. Legal safeguards alone are not sufficient to insure liberty, unless the individual also has a reasonable degree of economic opportunity. This is less easily provided in an industrial society than under pioneer conditions with unlimited free land. Thus we have come to include in our basic concept of democracy the principle that in the pursuit of happiness all men should have as nearly equal economic opportunity as their unequal natural endowment and the slow process of economic change permit.

Hard, uncomfortable facts have been accumulating which show that far too many American children belong to families that have no practical access to economic opportunity. These families, living in actual distress or in constant insecurity, are trapped in circumstances from which their own knowledge and initiative cannot extricate them. Not merely thousands but millions of children live under these handicaps, which they can escape only by outside help. And this is happening not by economic necessity but in a country blessed with splendid natural resources and a high level of public intelligence.

In addition to the striving for individual freedom and economic opportunity the developing national ideal includes, with new emphasis, capacity for cooperative life as a test of successful democracy. Thus varied forms of cooperative activity, both

local and on a national scale, are developing and strengthening the traditional American spirit of neighborly cooperation and civic responsibility.

In educating our children we desire, therefore, to give them freedom to express their natural interests, to enjoy life, and to gain that self-reliance which is hardly less important today than it was to the early American pioneer. We wish to rear them so that they may successfully participate in our democratic way of life. We seek to develop in them an appreciation of the expanding forms of civic responsibility and an understanding of the nature of social life and the satisfactions of cooperative enterprise.

The complexities of modern life require a structure of government and a social and economic order which will combine maximum individual freedom with maximum opportunity for every man to find a place among his fellows, to achieve self-support, preserve self-respect, and render community service. Events of recent years have proved that the preservation and further development of the better life in a democracy cannot be left to chance; they do not just happen. Plans must be made and adjusted to meet changes in the national economy, in international relations, and in scientific knowledge.

These changes require far-reaching modifications in our educational system, in family life, in local government, and in the relative responsibilities of local community, State, and Nation. They call for more awareness of the Nation as a unit and of goals national in scope.

Is the realization of such national standards and aspirations compatible with continued freedom? We believe that it is. In fact, this development is a true continuation of the process by which the Constitution was formed and adopted, bringing the powers and resources of the Nation of 1787 into line with the responsibilities and problems of that time. Since that

date the process has given us a rich and growing body of social legislation, a series of amendments to the National Constitution, and many Federal services of fundamental importance. It has given us an increasingly interwoven system of State and Federal services in the conservation of natural resources, in public education, and in public health and welfare.

Can a free people by conscious effort and thoughtful planning make certain that the needs of all their children will be met? Can they rear them so that their capacities will be developed for cooperative action in exercising the responsibilities of citizenship in a democracy? Can they bring up children who in turn will maintain and cherish their freedom? We believe they can, and in the means for accomplishing these ends we find the agenda of this Conference and of the new decade.

Reviewing the Record

The decades before 1930 were a period of great progress in the United States. Through many ups and downs—"cycles" in the economist's way of speaking—prosperity was increasing, the standard of living was rising, and a unified national consciousness was growing. Perhaps public attention through this period was centered too much on technical advances and the marvels of a mechanized civilization. Even in fields of more strictly human services technical progress was emphasized, as in medicine, public health, psychology, mental hygiene, governmental administration, and education. But in some of the less tangible ways also great strides were made toward better social conditions in the United States. These were real achievements expressing an enhanced appreciation of human values.

As crude exploitation of the resources of a virgin land and of the opportunities presented by a growing population slowly gave way to the growth of a more settled American culture,

efforts and funds were invested in the general welfare in generous and increasing amounts. A growing social conscience was becoming evident in the activities of individuals and groups, and in the functions of governments.

The enactment of social legislation is one example of this process. It included protection of women and children in industry and the establishment of public agencies to deal with labor, public welfare, health, workmen's compensation, and mothers' pensions. The labor movement was gaining in strength, despite many setbacks, and wages and conditions of work were slowly improving.

Public expenditures increased for parks, museums, schools, playgrounds, libraries, medical services, and research in such diverse fields as agriculture and medicine. School authorities conducted extensive and fruitful experiments in kindergartens, vocational preparation, and the development of secondary education. Underlying much of this progress was general interest in the new psychology with its illumination of human motives and its tolerant understanding of the vagaries of human behavior.

The creation of many new agencies to serve the public, as distinct from those designed for profit or livelihood, is also evidence of the new emphasis on human values in the decades before 1930. Social agencies to help people in trouble were established in large numbers and under many forms and auspices. They were supported by public funds, voluntary contributions, and the resources of many new "foundations."

The present Conference comes after 10 years of economic depression unprecedented in length and of great intensity. A large section of the population was left without income for months or even years. Since the economic soundness of a country underlies a continuance of its freedom, the development of its culture, and the quality of its public services, we

might have expected that the decade following 1929 would exhibit the worst conditions ever suffered by the people of this country, and either a retrogression to pioneer hardship or an attempted escape by the way of dictatorship through which some European countries have looked for salvation.

It is to the everlasting credit of this democracy that despite the strains of the past decade we not only have maintained our social institutions and public services but have notably improved some of them. The resiliency of this commonwealth and its ability to avoid any serious loss of morale under long-continued hardships have proved it to be a stable form of government adaptable to a machine-age civilization and capable of meeting new human needs by democratic methods.

Basic problems of agriculture, banking, finance, conservation of natural resources, employment, economic security, housing, and long-range economic stabilization have been examined during this period and remedial processes have been set in motion.

The health of the Nation has been studied and appraised; medical science has been brought more extensively into public service. Death rates have been reduced, tuberculosis has been more nearly brought under control, the health of children has been improved. Medical services have been expanded; public-health administration has been mobilized through local, State, and Federal agencies for steady progress toward building a healthy Nation. More has been learned about health dangers and deficiencies, the means of reducing some of them have been found, and programs of action have been established.

Education, recreation, and the problems of youth have been studied by public and voluntary bodies on a national scale and with a realism often enhanced by local participation and initiative. Nation-wide programs for the benefit of youth have been established.

But the purpose of this Conference is not to boast of the achievements of our democracy in prosperity and depression, but rather to press forward to achievements worthy of the freedom and wealth of our Nation. It is especially gratifying to note how fast and how consistently the general standard of living and the national income of this country have risen through the decades despite the interruptions of depressions. It is heartening to review the progress made and to observe the stability of our democratic institutions under strain. But a special obligation of this Conference is to point out the shortcomings and deficiencies that still exist. For every proof of progress that betokens our abilities, there is evidence of lags unworthy of our resources and our intelligence.

In some ways the financial collapse of 1929 and its aftermath of prolonged depression are evidences of this type. Even though there were danger signs of economic unsoundness—soil erosion, mortgage foreclosures, bank failures, wild financial speculation, concentration of financial control and increase of monopoly, growing unbalance between productive capacity and consuming power—still the year 1929 appeared to be a high plateau of prosperity, until it suddenly terminated in a precipice of tumbling destruction.

The fact that the prosperity of the twenties rested on economic practices which led to the stupendous losses of the thirties was an indication that in our preoccupation with the wonders of science we had neglected to develop the institutions necessary for its sound utilization. It is evident that much progress has been made in this respect since the drastic lesson of 1929. It is equally evident that despite all that has been done to meet the conditions of the depression, there are still great areas of distress among our population to which this Conference is bound to call attention, since they endanger the welfare of millions of children.

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Great inequalities have been discovered throughout the country in the available opportunities for children and youth in rural areas, in low-income groups, among the unemployed, among migrant workers, and in various minority groups. Honest inquiry has uncovered conditions unworthy of a democracy with resources like ours and dangerous to its future.

Because this democracy has shown itself bold and capable of dealing with a catastrophic depression without loss of courage or determination, the White House Conference on Children in a Democracy feels free to call public attention to the many conditions that still are hazardous to children and to the future of our democracy. It has no misgivings about this Nation's capacity to face unpleasant facts, its will to take on new and growing responsibilities, and its readiness to accept great burdens—for the goal is clear and abundant resources are at hand.

Our Concern, Every Child

The White House Conference on Children in a Democracy speaks to all the people for all the children. There are some 36 million children under 16 years of age in the United States, and about 5 million more aged 16 and 17—altogether nearly a third of the population.[1] Each year about 2 million babies are born. For numbers alone, if for no other reasons, these voteless fellow citizens who hold the national future in their bodies and minds are necessarily a first interest of the Nation.

Concern for the child begins before his birth in concern for his parents; it continues until the child reaches maturity. During this period of childhood, roughly 20 years, it is possible to distinguish certain needs of the child as an individual and other needs which are identical with those of his family or

[1] As estimated by the Bureau of Research and Statistics of the Social Security Board with the advice of the U. S. Bureau of the Census. The number of children under 16 is their estimate as of July 1, 1938; the number 16 and 17, as of July 1, 1937.

his community. The child receives or should receive services from many individuals, groups, and agencies in addition to his own family. Each has its special task; none can be performed successfully without regard for the others. However, the best intentions of one group have often been nullified by ignorance of the work of another, or by the interference or inefficiency of others. Too often people have failed to recognize the simple truth that the child cannot be broken up into parts—one for the parent, another for the teacher, one for the public official, another for the playground, and still another for the church. The child is an indivisible whole as he grows from infancy to manhood and must be planned for and served as such.

The Child in the Family

The vast majority of children are members of families. Their world opens up in a family, and they continue to spend most of the hours of the day in or about the home, even after school and playmates have begun to claim a large place in their thoughts and activities. Home and family are the first condition of life for the child. They are first in importance for his growth, development, and education.

The child has food and shelter if his family has a home and provides food.

He is content and happy if he is well, if he has parents and others to love and be loved by.

Education begins in the home, where he learns to speak, to walk, to handle things, to play, to demand, to give, to experiment.

Religious faith is imparted in the family long before he goes to church.

Adventure and safety, contentment and rebellion, cooperation, sharing, self-reliance, and mutual aid are family experiences.

The Family as the Threshold of Democracy

In spite of the great changes which have occurred in family life, especially in cities, there is still no more far-reaching educational institution than the family. It can be a school for the democratic life, if we make it so. What does the family teach? What services does it inaugurate? What bearing do these have on community services—schooling, religious guidance, recreation, employment, medical care, social services, and protection against exploitation?

Giving the child food, shelter, and material security in general is a primary task of the family. In the family there is opportunity also to teach the elements of personal hygiene, health, and the prevention of disease. Relationships with the doctor, the hospital, and other community services may be established. When the child reaches the school and the church, for example, he is likely to esteem them in accordance with the values which the family has placed upon them.

Less conspicuous but more important by far is what the child acquires through the family in regard to his relations with his fellows. Standards of conduct may be formed by fear or by example; they may be enforced by authority or by persuasion. It is in the relations of members of the family to one another that the quality of the American democratic way may find opportunity for its most conspicuous realization. Self-sufficiency, enterprise, initiative, and cooperation are virtues sought in children as well as in adults. The democratic family life consists of give and take, with freedom for each individual to express his own interests at the same time that he is tolerant and helpful to others.

Children are helped to develop these standards and capacities by sharing in family discussions and duties. Essential foundations are thus laid for participation in a democratic society.

How can the family make the best of its opportunities as the first school in democratic life?

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. It is essential to democracy that self-respect and self-reliance, as well as respect for others and a cooperative attitude, be fostered. These characteristics may be best acquired in childhood if the relationship among members of the family is of a democratic quality.

2. The democratic principle should be applied not only within the family but also by the family and its members in their relationships with others within the home and at church, club, place of employment, and elsewhere.

3. Parent education should be extended as a useful means for helping to bring about this type of family life.

Families and Their Incomes

A necessary condition of the family's capacity to serve the child is an income sufficient to provide the essentials of food, clothing, shelter, and health, as well as a home life that means for the child education, happiness, character building.

Parents, being human, differ from one another in competence, character, capacity to plan, energy, industry, resourcefulness. For this reason some parents will achieve a fine home under adverse conditions while others will fail to do so under favorable circumstances. These differences among parents are to be found in high places and low, among the wealthy and the poor. They involve good fortune for one child or an added handicap for another. Whatever these differences may be, some degree of material security is essential for the life and happiness of every family.

This was once an agricultural country. In 1820, 93 percent of the people were rural. Money incomes were extremely small, but many of the necessities for health and happiness, according to the standards of the time, were supplied by the farm and community without cost. By 1930 only one person in four lived on a farm, a smaller proportion in villages, and more than half in cities, where many families cannot even see a green tree without paying carfare. City costs of living not only are high in terms of the price of certain essential goods but also include items that in the country are "free as air."

Families are smaller than they used to be. The average, once nearly six persons per family, now is barely four. Rural families are larger than city families but are steadily decreasing in size.

Our standard of decent living has been raised to conform with advancing knowledge. Our ancestors could drink polluted water, could lose a high percentage of mothers by childbed fever, could bury one baby out of three, without feeling rebellious against society, because no human being knew how to prevent those calamities. But suffering and death that we know how to prevent are an outrage against decency, not to be suffered in meek submission but to be fought with every new weapon our generation has discovered. One may find some satisfaction, of course, in comparing the plane of living of American families, both urban and rural, with the levels of existence of the past or with the existence of many millions of people in other parts of the world. Despite this, however, there is widespread actual need. Many children, as well as many adults, lack sufficient food and adequate shelter, and many millions of Americans lack needed medical attention.

With the decrease in family size and the notable development of science and industry, it might be assumed that all families today would be assured of income sufficient for their needs. Estimates based on the number of children in families at different income levels in 83 cities show that one-half to two-thirds of the children in American cities live in homes where the family income is less than the equivalent of $1,260 for a family of four.[2] There is ample evidence, although it is not

[2] The number of children in families at different income levels was computed from data of the *National Health Survey, 1935*, in 83 cities in 19 States (U. S. Public Health Service). In another study (*Intercity Differences in Cost of Living, March 1935, 59 Cities*, by Margaret Loomis Stecker; Works Progress Administration Research Monograph XII, 1937) $1,261 was found to be the average cost for a family of four of a level of living defined for the purpose of that study as a "maintenance level of living." This study was made in 59 cities of more than 25,000 population, containing 60 percent of the total population in communities of more than 25,000 population in the United States. All regions were represented.

exactly comparable with these data, to indicate that the economic situation of farm families is no better.

The failure of income to keep pace with the needs of the family is illustrated in chart 1. The per capita income decreases sharply as the family increases in size, dropping to an average of $221 for each person in families of seven or more persons, in contrast to $774 for each person in 2-person families.

It is clear that the safety of our democratic institutions requires that as many families as possible be enabled to earn a decent income on a normal self-supporting basis. It is clear also that measures are required to supply substitute income where there is none or where income is insufficient to meet family needs.

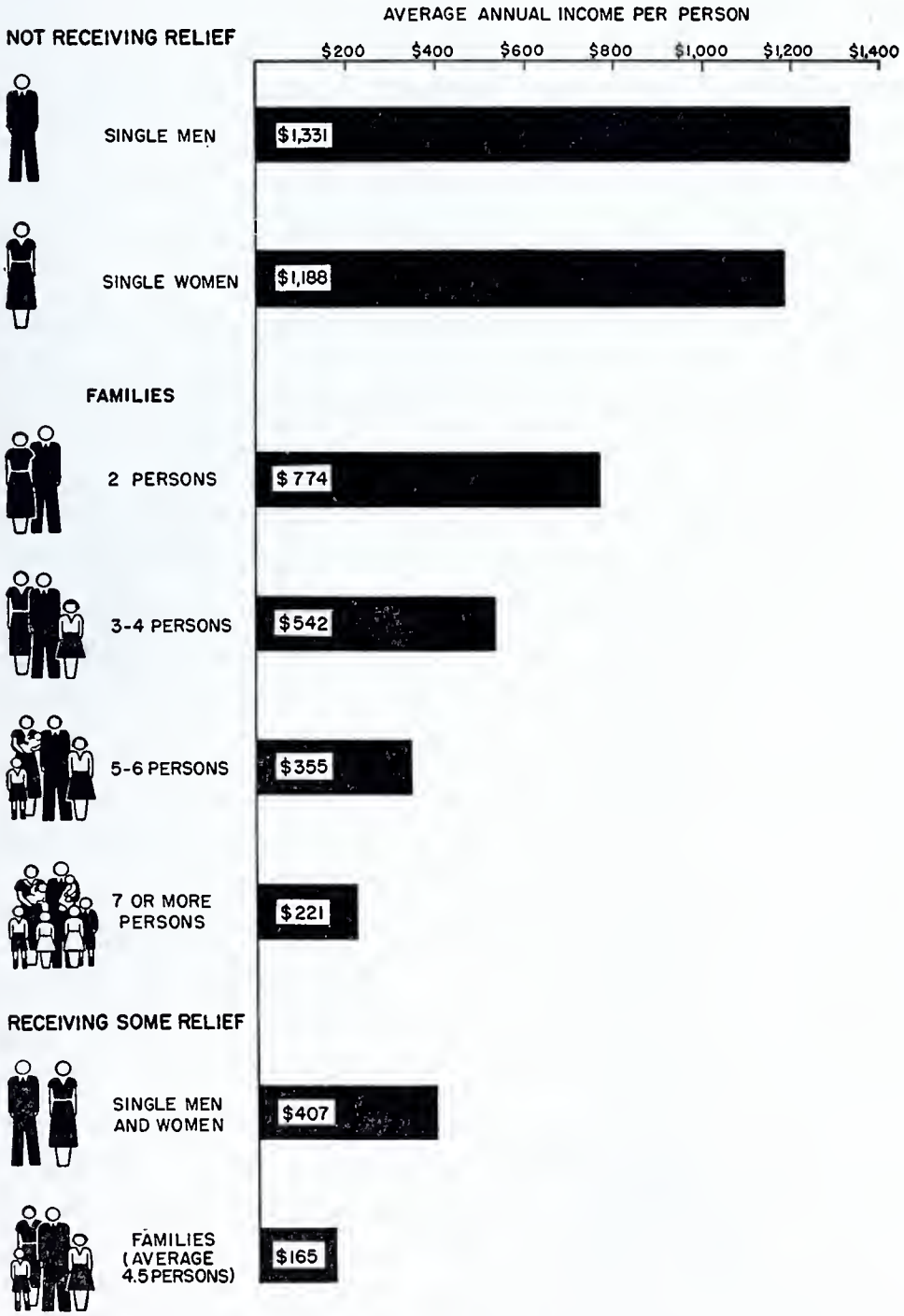
Twenty-five percent of the people not on relief obtain their incomes from farming and nearly 40 percent depend on wages in industry and trade and in other nonagricultural occupations.[3] Basic economic measures must be concerned, therefore, with agriculture and with wages. Farm income becomes available when agricultural products find a market, and wage income is available when industrial products find a market. Farm prices and wages should be sufficient to meet the basic needs of the worker and his family.

The basic economic problem of our children is the economic problem of the Nation—to find a sound balance of wages, prices, and financing that will provide a growing purchasing power to industrial workers and farmers and profitable investment for capital. The changing economic structure of modern civilization and of national and world markets calls for measures, directed toward these ends, of a kind different from those that were thought suitable for an earlier economy.

[3] For description of occupational classifications see *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (National Resources Committee, 1938), table 9, p. 26, and p. 44.

Chart 1

PER-CAPITA INCOME 1935–36, BY SIZE OF FAMILY



Source: Consumer Incomes in the United States, p. 46. National Resources Committee. Washington, 1938.

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The average income of farm families, after allowance is made for the value of home-consumed produce, is far below the average of the Nation.[4] This income has been especially depressed and uncertain under conditions that followed over-expansion during the World War. Far-reaching adjustments in agriculture have been needed and continue to be needed to keep the agricultural income from falling lower.

Increased industrial employment would undoubtedly improve the market for farm products, but special measures for agriculture would still be necessary. Among these are adequate provisions for soil and forest conservation as a permanent national policy; strengthening of Federal agencies for agricultural credit; special measures designed to achieve a better balance between agricultural prices and industrial prices; efforts directed toward increasing nonmonetary farm income through agricultural research and agricultural extension service; services to assist migration and resettlement of farm families from depressed or submarginal areas; and social-security laws adapted to the needs of agricultural workers.

Industrial workers, as well as farmers and farm laborers, require measures for assuring incomes adequate for their family needs. Among measures appropriate to wage earners are minimum-wage legislation and laws safeguarding the right of collective bargaining. Measures like these tend to make employment more stable and to protect the income of the workingman and his family.

In order to enable families in all income groups, especially those at the lower income levels, to spend their incomes more effectively, education in consumer purchasing should be expanded. Efforts of public and private agencies to improve the

[4] For farm-family income see *Consumer Incomes in the United States*, table 8, p. 25, and table 18B, p. 99. For figures on levels of living in farm families (household facilities, diet, and so forth) see *Agricultural Outlook Charts, 1940* (Bureau of Agricultural Economics and Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1939).

marketing of consumer goods and to provide consumers with more information to help them purchase more effectively should be encouraged.

In addition to measures which provide employment under the ordinary conditions of production through the use of private capital investment, there has been a steadily growing demand in recent years for public works through which employment might be provided from public funds. This has come about in part as a result of the growing realization of the need to conserve and develop national resources and an appreciation of the value of public provision for sanitation, highways, education, recreation, public health, hospitals, and other public services. Under conditions of modern life several million men annually must be employed in supplying our society with needed public works, and for them public works should be so conducted as to afford a dependable source of employment. In addition, it is clear that whenever private industry cannot find profitable use for all the available workers, the time, skill, and morale of the unemployed should be salvaged. This can be done in large part by increased provision for public employment.

While there has been a gratifying improvement recently in business and employment, there is little doubt that for some time there will continue to be a large volume of unemployment and periods of expansion and contraction in private employment. Unemployment is the major economic problem of the present day. There is much unemployment even in most prosperous times and students of the problem are in agreement that the level of unemployment has been rising the world over.

The main reliance for providing employment in our economy must be placed upon private employment. Every effort should be made both to impress industry with its responsibilities in

this respect and to help it to meet these responsibilities to the fullest possible extent. At the same time it needs ever to be borne in mind that for some years to come many people who are both willing and able to work cannot be employed unless private employment is supplemented by a well-considered and well-administered public-work program. It seems necessary that a system of appropriate and adequate work projects for the unemployed, as well as extensive public-work programs, be part of a continuing national policy, adjusted to the fluctuations of private employment.

Work programs, including both construction operations and the provision of services, should be adapted to the needs of the rural as well as the city population, should provide especially for the needs of youth, and might well develop or expand various types of services administered through existing agencies to promote the health and welfare of children and adults. A flexible, large-scale, low-cost housing program under Federal leadership in cooperation with State and local governments is desirable not only to supply urgently needed low-rent dwellings for low-income families but also to create useful employment, provide an outlet for idle capital, and improve community life.

The income of many families has been made more adequate and secure by the development of various types of social insurance. The economic-security measures incorporated in the Social Security Act of 1935 have become an accepted part of our national life. Their old-age-benefit provisions have been transformed by amendments enacted in 1939 into a type of family insurance through old-age and survivors benefits. Extension of the coverage of unemployment compensation and old-age and survivors insurance, liberalization of the benefits provided, and provision for insurance against loss of income through temporary or permanent disability are opportunities

for further advance. Workmen's compensation laws in most States are in need of strengthening as to coverage, benefits, and methods of administration.

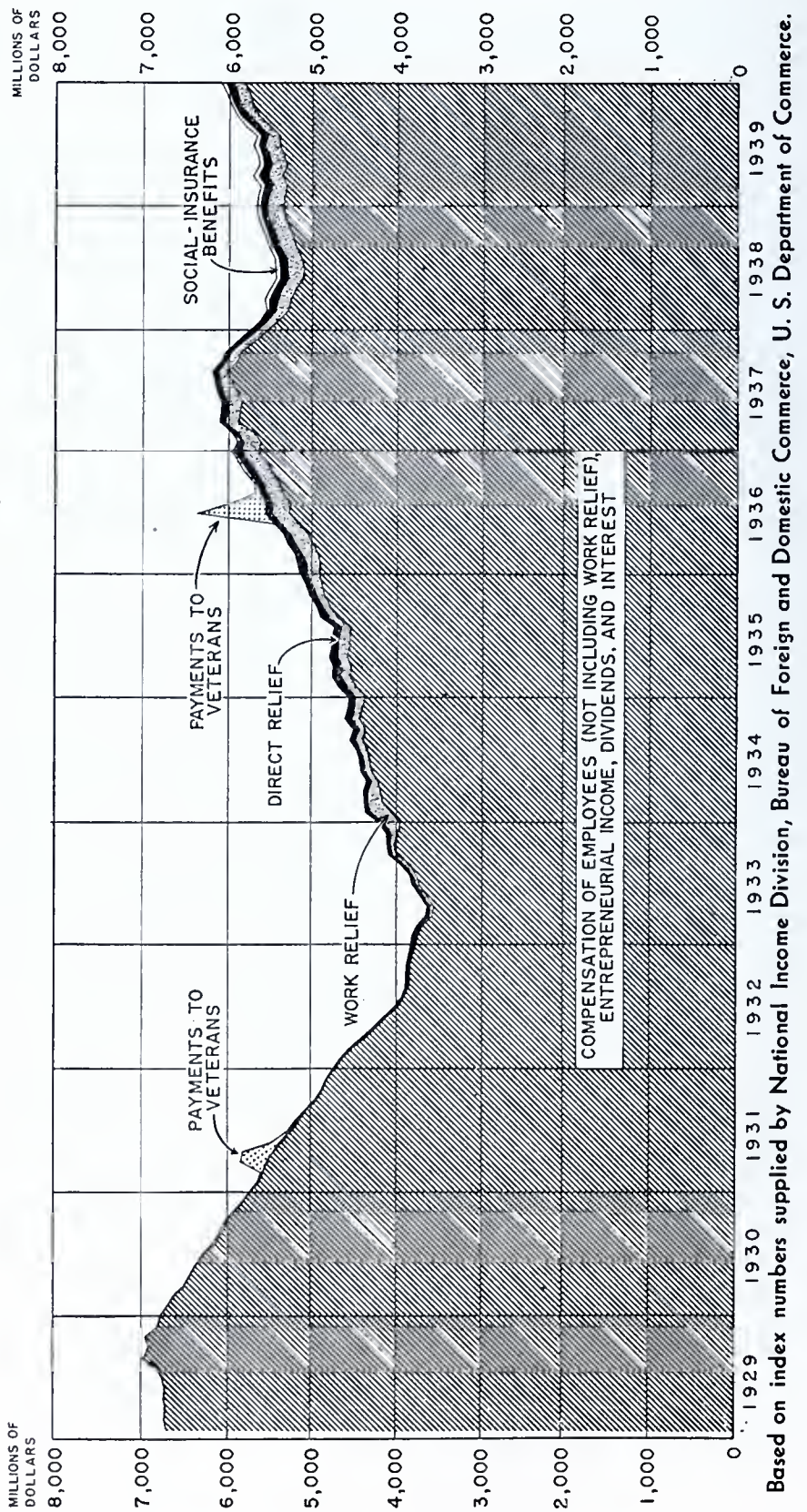
Although social-insurance benefits, public assistance, work relief, and general-relief payments made during the past decade have been of great significance from the point of view both of the social policies involved and of the number of persons benefited, they constitute in aggregate amount but a small proportion of the total income payments received by the American people, as is indicated in chart 2.

Most of these economic-security measures are already a part of the programs of State and Federal governments. They will become more effective as public opinion attains greater economic understanding and social insight.

Reference to public-work and housing programs and to extending, liberalizing, and supplementing the various forms of social insurance should not convey the impression that these are the only measures which can and should be developed to cope with the problem of unemployment. There are many other ways in which government can contribute to its solution; for example, better training of youth for the needs of industry, vocational information and guidance, retraining of workers who have lost their opportunities for employment through prolonged unemployment or technological changes, improved placement services, and research and planning for the development and conservation of our natural resources. These measures are primarily the responsibility of government. Likewise, much more can be done by industry to provide regular employment, to create jobs, to find suitable work for those thought to be misfits, and to perform more fully than it has in recent years the function of taking risks which in our economic system belongs primarily to industry.

Chart 2

INCOME PAYMENTS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1929–39



Based on index numbers supplied by National Income Division, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, U. S. Department of Commerce.

Families in Need of Assistance

During the process of adjustment to a changed economic situation many families and children are left without an assured livelihood because of unemployment, disability, low wages, or other factors beyond their control. It is becoming the established American policy that these families be given adequate economic assistance. This economic assistance has been called by various names, such as general relief, public assistance, work programs, old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, and allotment of surplus commodities.

The number of families requiring economic aid is so great that the standards of assistance affect the standards of American living as a whole. Between 6 and 8 million children in 1939 were in families dependent for food and shelter on various forms of economic aid. The following table [5] shows the approximate number of children involved:

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	Children in families receiving economic assistance	
	March 1939	August 1939
Work Projects Administration wages	4,500,000	3,000,000
General relief, State and local	2,400,000	2,000,000
Aid to Dependent Children	720,000	751,000
Farm Security Administration grants	300,000	170,000

It is common knowledge that the assistance given to many families is not enough to permit a good home for the children.[6]

[5] Table prepared by research staff of the Conference from information obtained from Social Security Board, Work Projects Administration, and Farm Security Administration. The major sources of financial assistance, Federal, State, and local, are included in these figures. The estimates on general relief and aid to dependent children were obtained from the Social Security Board. The number of families receiving aid from private agencies is unknown, as is the number receiving only surplus commodities. A large number of farm families at low income levels receive small loans for farm equipment and advice on home and farm management from the Farm Security Administration. The number of children under 16 in families receiving these loans and services was estimated to be 1,175,000 in March 1939 and 1,150,000 in August.

[6] Average amounts per case for general relief for December 1939 ranged from about $3 to about $36. *Social Security Bulletin*, February 1940, p. 58.

It is common knowledge, too, that there are families in need which receive no assistance.[7] The Conference recognizes that economic aid must continue to be given from public funds to a considerable number of families; that local, State, and Federal governments should share the responsibility; and that new, hitherto untried methods may have to be introduced and earlier measures extended.

In 1935 the Federal Government assumed responsibility for providing employment for employable persons, chiefly through the Works Progress Administration. Although it has not actually cared for all so-called employables, its share of the total national relief burden has continued to be much larger than the aggregate burden carried by the States. Some States have been able to meet general-relief needs for those not designated as employable or not cared for by other forms of economic assistance. Other States, however, have found it impossible to carry this part of the burden. This has resulted in uneven and frequently extremely low standards of relief, as well as neglect of many families in need of aid. Unless some other way, not yet suggested, can be found, the Conference believes that the Federal Government will need to take steps to strengthen general-relief systems in the States, including standards of administration, through financial participation in these programs.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. Measures for unemployment compensation, workmen's compensation, and old-age and survivors benefits,

[7] One source of such knowledge is *Some Aspects of the Relief Situation in Representative Areas of the United States*, a mimeographed report prepared by the American Association of Social Workers in May 1939. This report contains the following statement: "Some sections, mainly in the South and Southwest, report 'no general relief' to employables regardless of the degree of need, and that aid to unemployables, if given at all, is limited to sporadic grants in emergencies. In these areas Federal surplus commodities are the only aid available to thousands of needy families."

which are of special importance in relation to children, should be extended as to coverage and liberalized as to benefits provided, and insurance against loss of income through temporary or permanent disability should be developed.

2. The Federal Government should adopt a policy of continuing and flexible work programs for the unemployed, operated and primarily financed by the Federal Government and carried on in cooperation with State and local governments. The amount of work provided in each State should be in proportion to the number of needy unemployed. As supplementary to this program and in no way displacing it, the Federal Government should provide aid to the States for general relief covering all persons in need who are not in the categories now the objects of special Federal concern. Federal aid for general relief should be adjusted in each State to the economic capacities and relief needs of that State.

3. States should provide substantial financial assistance to local units to make possible adequate public assistance and relief. State assistance should be adjusted to need and financial capacity of the local units.

4. Aid to Dependent Children should be further developed with the objective of enabling each eligible family to provide adequate care for its children. Rigid limitations on the amounts of grants to individual children or families should be removed from State and Federal laws. Necessary appropriations should be made by State and local governments and by the Federal Government. Federal aid should be equitably adjusted to the economic capacities and the needs of the several States.

5. State laws making legal residence a prerequisite for economic aid should be made uniform and reasonable, with no more than a year required for establishing residence. The Federal Government should take full responsibility for developing plans to care for interstate migrants

and transients, such plans to be administered in cooperation with the States but with the Federal Government assuming complete financial responsibility. The States should assume the responsibility for State residents who are without legal local residence, with such aid as may be made available by the Federal Government for general public assistance.

6. In all systems of economic aid safeguards should be provided to assure staff selected on the basis of merit, adequate in number and qualifications to administer the benefits and to provide or obtain for each family the services needed.

7. Provision should be made for continued study of the problems of economic need and the operation of the various forms of economic aid in the light of changing conditions.

Families and Their Dwellings

The words "home" and "family" are often used interchangeably. Perhaps they should be so used. When a dwelling is really a home it is because of the life that the family breathes into it.

The character of a dwelling is important to every member of the family, but especially to children, who spend so much time in and near the house and are peculiarly susceptible to environmental influences. The design, construction, and surroundings of a family dwelling should therefore be developed with adequate reference to children's needs.

For all persons the dwelling should at least afford shelter that is safe against the elements; it should have sunlight and air; it should be safeguarded against fire and against impure water and improper disposal of sewage and garbage.

The dwelling should be well designed and large enough to offer such separate sleeping accommodations as the age and sex of its occupants may require; it is desirable that there should

be separation of sleeping, living, and cooking quarters, and opportunity for privacy.

A dwelling in which children are brought up should meet other specifications also. The single-family house with its own yard is unquestionably the best type. Indoor and outdoor play space, at least for children not old enough to reach recreation places unaccompanied by an older person, and accessibility to school, doctor, church, library facilities, recreational opportunities, and neighbors are important.

A suitable dwelling place is therefore a matter not only of the design of the structure itself but also of the character of the immediate surroundings and of the planning of whole neighborhoods for mutual protection and advantage and for freedom from traffic hazards and other dangers and demoralizing influences.

Farm, village, and urban dwellings present different kinds of problems. Farm and other rural homes house half the Nation's children under 15 years of age. Many of these children are members of large families. When the farmer chooses a home he considers the land and equipment, with which he must earn his living, as well as the dwelling. His limited resources of necessity may go into care of machinery and stock rather than into improvement of the house. Modern conveniences are usually expensive to install on the farm. Accessibility to community facilities constitutes a peculiarly difficult problem in rural areas.

Contrary to general opinion, many farm houses are in effect "slum" structures, and this is particularly true of a large number of rented farms whose occupancy changes often. For example, 1 million of the 3 million farm-tenant families moved in a single year.[8] Upkeep of the dwellings is usually

[8] The *Report of the President's Committee on Farm Tenancy, 1937* (p. 7) showed that in the spring of 1935, 34.2 percent of the 2,865,000 tenant farmers of the Nation had occupied their farms only 1 year.

poor. Far below even this range are the shelters (or camps) of migrant families.

The Farm-Housing Survey made in 1934, covering 620,000 farm dwellings, showed that 18 percent were more than 50 years old, and only 16 percent were less than 10 years old. Less than 12 percent had bath tubs, 8 percent had central heating, 18 percent had a home plant or a power line furnishing electricity, 17 percent had running water in the house.[9]

In the city certain facilities such as indoor flush toilets, baths, and central heating are essential. This is especially true in multiple-dwelling structures. A recent study [10] showed that of some 8 million urban dwellings 15 percent were without such toilets, 20 percent were without baths. One of every six dwellings needed major repairs or was unfit for use.

The undesirable dwellings in the main were occupied by families with low incomes. Sixty times as many "unfit for use" dwellings were occupied by city families paying $10 or less per month in rent as were occupied by those paying $50 or more; twenty times as many "in need of major repairs" were occupied by the $10 group as by the $50 group.[11]

The housing situation cannot be corrected overnight. Because of underbuilding during the depression years, there is an accumulated numerical shortage of more than 1½ million dwellings in cities and villages, in addition to about 2½ million

[9] From an unpublished report by the Bureau of Home Economics, based on *The Farm-Housing Survey* (U. S. Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No. 323, Washington, D. C.), directed by the Bureau of Home Economics, in cooperation with the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, Extension Service, and Office of the Secretary, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

[10] *Urban Housing; a summary of real-property inventories conducted as work projects, 1934–36,* by Peyton Stapp, p. 4. Works Progress Administration [now Work Projects Administration]. Washington, 1938. The data were obtained in 203 urban communities, which included more than two-fifths of the urban families in the United States. New York City was not included in the figure for dwellings in need of major repairs or unfit for use.

[11] The statements in this paragraph are based on compilations from surveys for 22 of the cities.

worn-out houses in need of replacement.[12] Some 3 million farm dwellings fail to meet minimum health and comfort standards.[13] In the past, private capital, loans, and traditional ways of financing have provided the funds used in the construction of dwellings. The old ways obviously are not sufficient either for community planning or for financing the housing of low-income families. Since the solution is not likely to be an early general increase in family income great enough to make low-rent housing attractive to private enterprise, it is clear that local, State, and Federal governments must take some responsibility and leadership in this field. Fortunately the past decade has been an epoch-making period in the history of housing. It has seen local, State, and Federal governments enter this field, especially for low-income groups, to an extent that gives promise of notable achievement.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. The Federal Government should continue and expand its program of promoting slum clearance and new housing for low-income groups through further authorization of Federal loans and appropriations for Federal grants to local housing authorities.

2. The Federal Government should give attention to rural areas where half of the Nation's children live. Federal housing programs for rural areas should be adapted to rural conditions and should include grants and loans for construction of new homes and repair of substandard dwellings when their condition warrants, assistance in providing safe water supply and sanitation, and encouragement of electrification.

3. State and municipal governments should enact legislation to provide loans and grants for public housing and

[12] *Introduction to Housing, Facts and Principles*, by Edith Elmer Wood, p. 70. U. S. Housing Authority, Federal Works Agency. Washington, 1939.

[13] Estimate based on information in *Farm-Housing Survey*.

to authorize cooperation with the Federal Government in housing programs.

4. Better housing for families of moderate income should be promoted by safeguarding credit for housing purposes to assure low interest rates and long-term amortization, thus serving to stimulate private building and home ownership; by encouraging cooperative effort of industry and labor to reduce building costs; and by encouraging housing cooperatives and other agencies in which the motive of profit is subordinated to that of social usefulness.

5. Adequate regulatory laws should be enacted, and they should be enforced by competent inspection departments in every city. Such departments should have budgets sufficient for enforcement of laws and regulations concerning construction, management, maintenance, and repair of dwellings, and demolition of buildings when necessary. Local governments should modernize their building, sanitary, zoning, and housing codes to conform to present knowledge of sanitary and other requirements and to eliminate needless cost.

6. Public-assistance budgets should include provision for housing adequate for family needs. In each community rent allowances should be based on the rental cost of such housing.

7. Continuous research by public and private agencies should be part of housing programs. Appropriations should be made for this purpose to governmental agencies participating in housing.

8. Since an enlightened public opinion is essential in housing, as in every other socially important field, citizen committees should be organized in communities to promote public interest, understanding, and support. Housing facts and problems should be made widely known to the public through formal and informal education.

Religion in the Lives of Children

The child, whether in the family, the school, the church, or leisure-time activities, needs to have a personal appreciation of ethical values consistent with a developing philosophy of life. Increasingly as he matures, he needs to see life whole and in its complex relationships. Here the potent influence of religion can give to the child a conviction of the intrinsic worth of persons and also assurance that he has a significant and secure place in an ordered universe.

Democracy seeks to reconcile individual freedom with social unity. In the development of the children of a democracy a proper balance must be maintained. Historically religion has succeeded in maintaining such a balance by placing its emphasis upon the worth of the individual and at the same time upon human fellowship.

The primary responsibility for the religious development of the child rests upon the parents. In the family he is first introduced to his religious inheritance as he is introduced to his mother tongue. Here the foundations are laid for the moral standards that are designed to guide his conduct through life. A child's religious development is fostered and strengthened by participation in the life of the family in which religion is a vital concern. Responsibility for the religious growth of children and youth is shared by the church and other social organizations that are concerned with their guidance.

Despite the various efforts made by church groups to educate their children in religion, the religious needs of many children are imperfectly met at the present time. It has been estimated that approximately one-half of the children and

youth in the United States receive no religious instruction outside the home.[14] President Roosevelt has said, "We are concerned about the children who are outside the reach of religious influences and are denied help in attaining faith in an ordered universe and in the Fatherhood of God."

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. Parents, teachers, and others responsible for guiding children should be ever alert to the importance to the child of facing specific life situations. Such situations may provide the occasions for vital and creative religion to function. Adult leaders of children should be persons of the utmost personal integrity and of the highest ideals who have themselves a vivid appreciation of spiritual values.

2. Whole-hearted recognition and appreciation of the fundamental place of religion in the development of culture should be given by all who deal with children and by representatives of the press, radio, and motion picture. Religion should be treated frankly, openly, and objectively as an important factor in personal and social behavior. When religion enters normally into the subject matter of courses such as literature, the history of ideas, philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences, the attitude referred to should be maintained.

3. Further exploration should be made of the use of religious resources in personal counseling as it relates to the welfare of children.

4. Churches and synagogues need to emphasize the common ends which they share with one another and with other community agencies. Religion should be one of the unifying factors influencing the divergent elements that constitute the community. Although they hold to different creeds, the churches should constitute a bulwark

[14] Estimate for 1926 of the Department of Research of the International Council of Religious Education.

against factionalism and antagonism in local communities. Churches and synagogues should recognize their responsibility to the community and contribute to mutual good will and cooperation on the part of all groups by discovering and emphasizing their common objectives, by helping people to understand and appreciate the loyalty of other groups to their own convictions, and by utilizing their resources for the welfare of the community. They should seek every opportunity to cooperate with other community agencies in specific projects which contribute to the welfare of children.

5. Practical steps should be taken to make more available to children and youth through education the resources of religion as an important factor in the democratic way of life and in the development of personal and social integrity. To this end the Conference recommends that a critical and comprehensive study be made of the various experiences both of the churches and of the schools in dealing with the problem of religious education in relation to public education. The purpose of such a study would be to discover how these phases of education may best be provided for in a total program of education, without in any way violating the principle of the separation of church and State. To conduct such a study a privately supported nongovernmental commission should be created which will have on it representatives of national educational and religious educational organizations, and other representatives of the principal religious bodies.

Educational Services in the Community

Formal education centers in the school and extends to other agencies, such as the library and the recreation center. Play is an essential part of every child's education. Reading may be learned in school but it soon becomes the means of independent recreation and cultural growth. Thus the library, the school, and the recreation center join in a comprehensive educational system. No hard and fast lines separate the functions of these agencies.

Educational programs, whether they refer to class instruction, to recreation, or to reading, should be available equitably to all children. To approach this equity is an essential part of the program of action proposed by this Conference. A primary responsibility of our democracy is to establish and maintain a fair educational opportunity to which every American child is entitled. This should be a Nation-wide goal, sought through all the thousand varieties of local conditions and traditions. In this there is a value beyond direct educational benefits. Every American child should be able to feel pride and patriotism because his country assures educational opportunity for him and for every other child.

We should remember, too, that changes in our national life, in economics and culture, often require modifications in the scope, content, method, and management of educational service. The scope of education is gradually being extended to age limits above and below the traditional 6-to-16 period. The content of education should deal with the personal, social, and economic issues of the day; its method should take account of scientific discoveries in child growth, child care, and the

learning process. And the management of the educational services should seek always to combine maximum efficiency with the requirements of individual initiative and freedom.

Schools

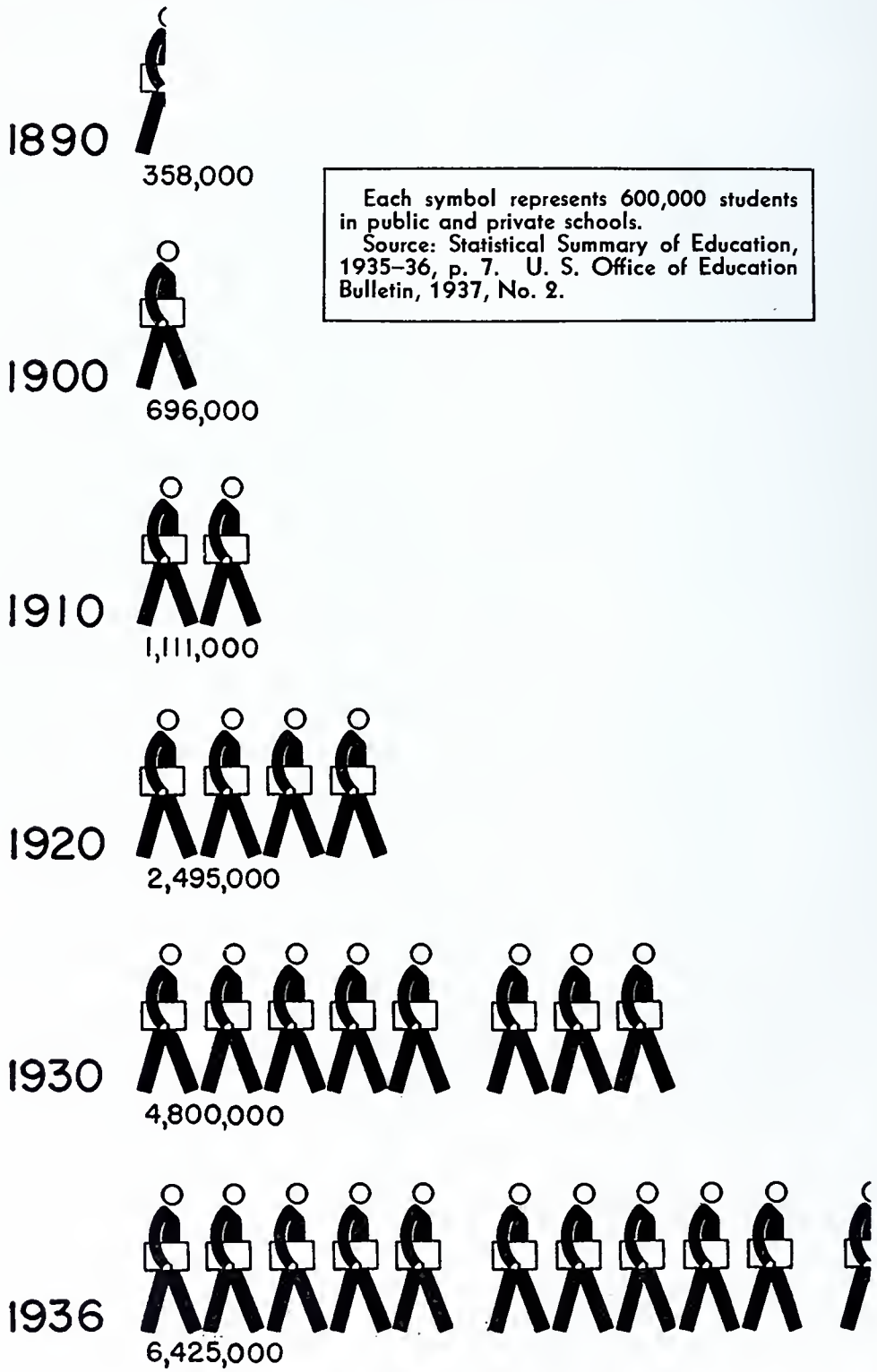
The fundamental purposes of the American schools are sound. Their successes and shortcomings in attaining these purposes are well known. The Advisory Committee on Education, the United States Office of Education, the Educational Policies Commission, the American Youth Commission, and many other agencies have reported the present situation and recent changes. Those who established this Republic recognized the relationship between an educated electorate and representative government. The principle of providing educational opportunity for every child was recognized in State constitutions as the several States were admitted to the Union. This principle has gradually assumed the substance of reality. Elementary education now reaches well over 90 percent of all children of appropriate ages. The enrollment in secondary schools has doubled or nearly doubled in every decade from 1890 to 1930,[15] as is indicated in chart 3. During the past decade this growth has continued. Secondary education is rapidly becoming, both in public opinion and in actual fact, a part of the general educational opportunity which all children may expect and enjoy. Yet a substantial proportion of the adults in the United States did not finish elementary school. Nearly a million children of elementary-school age are not in school, and school opportunities for hundreds of thousands of children of migrant and rural families and of Negroes are often deplorable or entirely lacking.[16]

[15] *Statistical Summary of Education, 1935–36*, p. 7. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1937, No. 2. Washington, 1939.

[16] Advisory Committee on Education: *Report of the Committee, February 1938*, pp. 9–11, 31–34, 133. Washington, 1938.

Chart 3

SECONDARY-EDUCATION ENROLLMENT, 1890–1936



Each symbol represents 600,000 students in public and private schools.

Source: Statistical Summary of Education, 1935–36, p. 7. U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1937, No. 2.

National resources for increasing opportunities and for reducing inequalities in education are not lacking. Nevertheless, there are States in this country that compared with other States, have twice the population 5 to 17 years of age in proportion to adults 20 to 64 but only one-fifth the amount of income per child of school age.[17] The resources of many school districts and even of entire States and regions cannot keep pace with the needs of the school population nor provide suitable standards of educational efficiency.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. Units of local school attendance and administration should be enlarged wherever necessary in order to broaden the base of financial support and to make possible a modern well-equipped school for every child at a reasonable per-capita cost.

2. Substantial financial assistance should be granted by every State to its local school systems for the purpose of equalizing tax burdens and reducing educational inequalities.

3. An extended program of Federal financial assistance to the States should be adopted in order to reduce inequalities in educational opportunity among States. Because the minority groups have proportionately more children than others and live to a greater extent in areas with the least resources, the principle of Federal aid to States for services affecting children is extremely important for their welfare.

4. The supreme educational and social importance of individual traits should be recognized throughout the educational system. An educational system that truly serves a democracy will find no place for the philosophy or the methods of mass production.

[17] *Equal Educational Opportunity for Youth*, by Newton Edwards, pp. 111, 154–155. American Council on Education. Washington, 1939.

5. Schools should give increased attention to the educational needs of individual children, including those who are physically handicapped, mentally retarded, or socially handicapped; these needs should be met with minimum emphasis on the handicap.

6. The professional education of teachers should be enriched by study of the principles of child development, the role of education in an evolving social order, and the significance of democratic procedures in school life.

7. Teachers and other workers in all branches of education should be selected and retained in service on the basis of professional qualifications alone. They should be adequate in number to permit them to give attention to the needs of each individual child.

8. School systems should provide nursery school, kindergarten, or similar educational opportunities for children between the ages of 3 and 6.

9. Local school systems should provide free educational opportunities, in accordance with individual needs, for youth up to 18 or 20 years of age, in preparation for higher education, in basic and specialized vocational training, or in general educational advancement.

10. Schools should make available to young people, while in school and after they leave school, systematic personal and vocational guidance and organized assistance in job placement, in cooperation with public employment services.

11. School health supervision and health and safety education should be made more effective so as to protect the health of the child and to give him better understanding of the principles and practices of social and community hygiene.

12. Schools should assume further responsibility for providing wholesome leisure-time activities for children and their families, and new school buildings should be planned and equipped with these functions in mind.

13. Education for civic responsibility should be emphasized with the aim of developing personal integrity and intelligent loyalty to democratic ideals and institutions. For this purpose the child's learning experiences should include participation in the activities of community life, on a level appropriate to his degree of maturity.

14. Schools should cooperate with other community institutions and agencies that serve the child. Close cooperation with parents is especially important.

15. Research divisions should be established by local school systems wherever possible and by State departments of education. Budgets for the United States Office of Education should be increased to permit the extension of research and related services. Planning of educational policies and programs at all levels should be based on research.

16. The traditional concern of American education with ethical values as well as mental and physical development should continue to be the fundamental obligation of the schools. It is desirable that the teaching and administrative staffs should maintain among themselves and in their attitudes toward children the processes and viewpoints characteristic of a democratic society. Such attitudes will thrive only in an atmosphere of freedom to teach and freedom to learn.

Leisure-Time Services

The educational importance of play and of the constructive use of leisure time has been given substantial recognition only since the turn of the century. Consequently the provision of opportunity for recreation and informal education still lacks full acceptance as a public responsibility and the existing facilities lag far behind desirable standards.

All children and youth need experience through which their elemental desire for friendship, recognition, adventure, crea-

tive expression, and group acceptance can be realized. Normal family life contributes much toward meeting these basic emotional needs. Voluntary participation in informal education and recreation under favorable conditions also contributes greatly. Such activities help to meet certain developmental needs—the need of congenial companionship with the opposite sex, the need for emotional development and a healthy independence, and other needs that arise at different stages in the individual's progress toward maturity. They furnish, finally, an important means whereby the child can express his need for the development of motor, manual, and artistic skills, for contact with nature, for the socializing experience of group life, and for responsible participation in community life. Much recreation, perhaps the best of it, is enjoyed in family units or is provided under circumstances that serve both young and old.

The provision of opportunities for the entire population, developed through cooperative, intelligent planning, is the concern of both public and private agencies. Private agencies provide a medium by which groups of citizens through voluntary effort can identify, interpret, and seek to meet special community needs. This is especially important in areas of activity which are yet unrecognized by the larger community. Private agencies usefully emphasize responsibility and participation on the part of volunteers, and bring volunteer and professional leaders into creative association. Both public and private agencies are experimenting in new areas of need and in new methods of work. Private agencies often prepare the community for larger public effort and for the transfer of services from private to public auspices.

Local, county, State, and National parks, school and community playgrounds, and, more recently, the recreation projects of the W. P. A. have also helped to give recreation a significant place in the total educational enterprise.

Within any community, State, or region opportunity for leisure-time activities must be planned. If it grows haphazardly, with school, parks, and private agencies acting independently, the program may be wasteful and retarded. Planning, on the other hand, may lead to coordination of services and facilities. It also helps to bring about public recognition of the fact that recreation for young and old requires leadership, equipment, and trained personnel.

Cognizance must also be taken of the vast increase in, and growing importance of, recreation under commercial auspices. This is not limited to entertainment and cultural opportunities, such as are provided by radio, motion pictures, and the theater. It includes also many opportunities for sports and active recreation. Commercial recreation is usually available only to those who can afford to pay for it, but it is largely influenced, in both quality and quantity, by the character and amount of the demand. Educational agencies can play a role in promoting intelligent choice and appreciation of these forms of recreation.

There are distinctive recreational needs and opportunities in rural and in urban surroundings. The natural surroundings of the countryside enrich the life of the rural child. Organized recreation, on the other hand, has been more available to city children. Leaders in the field of play and recreation, from the earliest innovators to present administrators, have emphasized the need for balance between organization and spontaneity in the development of the play life of the child. Whether in city or country, organized programs under competent leadership have been found of importance for the formation of democratic habits and attitudes.

Recreation for children in a democracy should reflect the values that are implicit in the democratic way of life. This means, among other things, a program that emerges from the

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life of the people; a leadership that responds to the vital needs and interests of children; a relationship with people in the community that involves them in responsible participation both in planning and in management; and a form of administration that is democratic and elicits the values of group experience.

With these considerations in mind the Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. The development of recreation and the constructive use of leisure time should be recognized as a public responsibility on a par with responsibility for education and health. Local communities, States, and the Federal Government should assume responsibility for providing public recreational facilities and services, as for providing other services essential to the well-being of children. Private agencies should continue to contribute facilities, experimentation, and channels for participation by volunteers.

2. Steps should be taken in each community by public and private agencies to appraise local recreational facilities and services and to plan systematically to meet inadequacies. This involves utilization of parks, schools, museums, libraries, and camp sites; it calls for coordination of public and private activities and for the further development of private organizations in providing varied opportunities for children with different resources and interests. Special attention should be directed toward the maximum utilization of school facilities for recreation in both rural and urban areas.

3. Emphasis should be given to equalizing the opportunities available to certain neglected groups of children, including—

Children living in rural or sparsely settled areas.
Children in families of low income.
Negro children and children of other minority groups.
Children in congested city neighborhoods.

Children just leaving school and not yet adjusted to outside life, with special emphasis on unemployed youth.

Children with mental, emotional, or physical handicaps.

4. Public and private organizations carrying responsibility for leisure-time services should assist and cooperate in developing public recognition of the fact that recreation for young and old requires facilities, equipment, and trained personnel.

5. Schools and other educational and civic organizations should promote intelligent choice and appreciation of various forms of commercial recreation.

6. Because of the growing significance of radio and motion pictures in their impact on children and youth, social organizations and entertainment industries, insofar as they are concerned with the leisure time of children, should collaborate wherever possible in order to provide programs that will contribute to the sound development of children.

7. A privately supported nongovernmental national commission on recreation should be created to study leisure-time needs and resources and to make recommendations concerning the development of recreation and informal education.

Libraries

Little argument is needed to convince the American people of the importance of public libraries. Whether for leisure, for education, for vocational advancement, for research, or for the dissemination of knowledge, the library is an indispensable public service. The free public library is a characteristic institution of democratic life. Most public libraries are municipal, town, or county institutions. A smaller number are

partly endowed and partly dependent upon public appropriations. School libraries have become a cardinal feature of modern schools. In recent years many traveling libraries and branch libraries in isolated areas have been developed.

Nevertheless, according to figures collected by the American Library Association in 1938, more than 18 million persons under 20 years of age are still without local public-library service. Of these young persons more than 17 million live in rural areas. The best type of library to serve rural areas is the county or regional library. Last year 400 of more than 3,000 counties in the United States were served by such libraries.[18]

More libraries are needed both in schools and for general public use in all regions of the country. The shortage is especially acute in rural areas, where there is little hope of obtaining them through local funds.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. The States should encourage and assist in the extension and development of local public-library service and give financial aid for the maintenance of such service. In rural areas provision should be made for traveling libraries to reach isolated homes and communities.

2. Federal grants to the States for general public education should be available for school libraries. Special Federal grants should be made available for extension of library service to rural areas.

3. Libraries should provide for special collections and personnel to serve children. Provision should also be made for material and for library advisory service for parents on subjects relating to child care and training.

4. Libraries should be staffed by personnel trained and qualified specifically for this work.

[18] *Report of the Library Extension Board of the American Library Association for the Year Ending July 31, 1939.* Bulletin of the American Library Association, Vol. 33, No. 9 (September 1939), pp. 552–557. The association estimates that the number of counties now served is 450.

Protection Against Child Labor

Child labor is still a serious problem in this country in spite of progress in its control under State and Federal laws. Although the number of employed children has decreased to a marked degree in recent years, children under 16 still cut short their education to go to work, or engage in work during vacation and outside school hours under conditions detrimental to their fullest physical, mental, and social growth. According to estimates of the National Child Labor Committee, at least half a million children under 16 are still gainfully employed. For the still larger number of young workers between 16 and 18 years of age existing safeguards for protection from hazardous or otherwise detrimental conditions of employment are far from adequate.

The development of public opinion favorable to the extension of the period of school attendance for children and the protection of young persons from unfavorable employment conditions after they leave school has resulted in restrictive and regulative legislation, both State and Federal. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, with its basic 16-year minimum age, now governs the employment of children in industries producing goods for interstate commerce. But the great majority of child workers, particularly those under 16 years of age, are in industries which are strictly intrastate in scope and therefore not subject to the Federal act. These industries also are less well regulated by State law than factory work, which to a large extent is subject to the Federal act because of its interstate character. Only 12 State laws set a basic minimum age of 16 for employment. There are still large areas of

child employment, such as industrialized agriculture, street trades, domestic service, and industrial home work, where much exploitation exists that escapes legislative control and where special administrative problems make effective regulation difficult of achievement. Many young workers are subject to undue industrial health and safety hazards. The effectiveness of the protective standards that have been set up by law is often lessened by lack of adequate administrative machinery.

Prevention of the exploitation of children and youth in premature and harmful labor must be accompanied by provision for educational training, open to all children, during the years left free from wage earning. This education should recognize the changing conditions of employment, and adaptations that are needed in all educational programs as described in the sections on educational services and on youth and their needs. Such education, moreover, should be adapted to the individual needs of the pupils and should equip them with the knowledge, skills, and habits that they will need in making adjustment to the industrial and social problems of the modern world.

The fact cannot be too strongly emphasized that the work of children in certain phases of agriculture is different today from what it was when children were mainly working for their parents or cooperating in harvesting a neighbor's crops. With the development of intensive cultivation of specialized crops there has grown up the practice of using large numbers of children in industrialized agriculture under conditions which in many instances differ little from those of "sweatshop" employment and which require the same kind of safeguards as those found necessary with reference to industrial employment.

The Conference endorses the following requirements, now widely accepted as minimum for protective legislation:

1. A minimum age of 16 for all employment during school hours and for employment at any time in manufacturing or mining occupations or in connection with power-driven machinery.

2. A minimum age of 16 for employment at any time in other occupations, except as a minimum age of 14 may be permitted for limited periods of work after school hours and during vacation periods in agriculture, light non-manufacturing work, domestic service, and street trades. Determination of desirable standards for legislation governing child actors requires further study.

3. A minimum age of 18 or higher for employment in hazardous or injurious occupations.

4. Hours-of-work restrictions for persons up to 18 years of age, including maximum hours, provision for lunch period, and prohibition of night work, the hours permitted not to exceed 8 a day, 40 a week, and 6 days a week.

5. Requirement of employment certificates for all minors under 18, issued only after the minor has been certified as physically fit for the proposed employment by a physician under public-health or public-school authority.

6. At least double compensation under workmen's compensation laws in cases of injury to illegally employed minors.

7. Minimum-wage standards for all employed minors.

8. Abolition of industrial home work as the only means of eliminating child labor in such work.

9. Adequate provision for administration of all laws relating to the employment of children and youth.

The Conference also makes the following recommendation:

10. Ratification of the child-labor amendment to the Constitution of the United States should be completed immediately.

With reference to provision of school facilities as it bears on child labor, the Conference recommends the following:

11. Compulsory school attendance laws should be adjusted to child-labor laws, since school leaving and child labor are closely related. Schooling during at least 9 months of the year should be both compulsory for and available to every child up to the age of 16.

12. It is the obligation of the community to provide a suitable educational program for all youths over 16 who are not employed or provided with work opportunities.

13. Financial aid from public sources should be given whenever necessary to young persons to enable them to continue their education even beyond the compulsory-attendance age if they wish to do so and can benefit thereby.

Youth and Their Needs

The transition from childhood to youth is gradual. Boys and girls from 16 to 20 years are on the threshold of life as adults, when they will carry responsibility not only for their own lives but for the life of the Nation as a whole. They are entering the period when decisions must be made in regard to the kinds of lives they will live and the kinds of social and political programs they will endorse by their votes and their opinions. The circumstances and state of mind of youth are, therefore, of utmost importance not only for their own future but for the future of our society.

What does youth expect? Traditionally, in the United States, the young person out of school looks forward to a job of some kind in which there is opportunity for advancement; he looks forward to self-support and independence, to the establishment of a family, and to participation in the social and civic life of the community.

What is the situation of youth today? The American Youth Commission, in its leaflet, Program of Action for American Youth, estimates, on the basis of the unemployment census of 1937, that one-third of the unemployed workers in the United States are young persons between 15 and 25 years of age and that about 4 million youth of these ages are out of work. The rate of unemployment is higher for youth than for any other age group. Even in fairly prosperous times, young persons have difficulty in getting started at useful employment.

What does youth have in the absence of job opportunity and self-support? Many are members of families that are not

self-sustaining and therefore have few resources. School programs are not sufficiently adapted to the needs of youth, in spite of great progress in the enlargement of secondary-education facilities to the point where the number of young persons enrolled in secondary schools represents nearly three-fourths of the population 14 to 17 years of age.[19] Recreational facilities also are insufficient for the young person approaching adulthood.

School programs for older age groups should be thoroughly reorganized in order to meet the cultural and vocational needs of a large proportion of young people not adequately served now. Broader conceptions of vocational preparation are particularly important. Training for specific skilled jobs can be only part of a suitable program. There are relatively fewer job opportunities in the skilled and unskilled fields than formerly, and more in semiskilled occupations. The increase in openings for employment in service trades calls for greater social adjustment and adaptability. It is of primary importance that young people receive general preparation that will be of practical value to them in seeking and in beginning employment under the conditions and relationships which actually prevail in industry and business today. Schools should help young people to obtain a general understanding of social and economic problems and to acquire work habits suited to the kind of opportunities which will be available. Schools should take particular pains to introduce young people to the cultural and educational opportunities that can be continued after they leave school.

Vocational preparation, general and specific, and employment services are not in themselves enough. The way must be open to actual employment. The Civilian Conservation

[19] Figures in *Statistical Summary of Education, 1935–36* (U. S. Office of Education Bulletin, 1937, No. 2, p. 12) show this proportion to be 67 percent during the school year 1935–36. The corresponding estimate for 1938, according to the Office of Education, is 72 percent.

Corps and the National Youth Administration, both initiated and conducted by the Federal Government, are designed to meet some of the employment needs of youth. They have made outstanding contributions by programs combining work and education. An enrollment of 300,000 is authorized in the C. C. C. On its work program for out-of-school youth, the N. Y. A. gave part-time employment to an average of about 235,000 in 1939. There have been few comparable activities under State or local governments. Thus at a given time probably less than one-seventh of the young persons out of school and out of work are being aided through these constructive efforts. The C. C. C. and the N. Y. A. must be regarded as pioneer experiments showing what needs to be done on a much larger scale, rather than as services actually covering all the present needs of youth.

The situation of youth calls urgently for action.

The Conference believes that the cost of constructive programs will be less than the ultimate cost of the neglect of youth.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. Programs of general secondary education based on changes in industrial demands and opportunities and contributing significantly to responsible citizenship, wholesome family life, constructive use of leisure time, and appreciation of our cultural heritage should be developed.

2. Vocational preparation, guidance, and counseling services adapted to modern conditions and the changing needs of youth should be extended in the school systems, and when carried on under other auspices, should be conducted in cooperation with the schools.

3. Placement services for young workers should be staffed by properly qualified and professionally trained workers, with full cooperation between the schools and the public employment services.

4. Federal, State, and local governments should provide work projects for youths over 16 not in school who cannot obtain employment. Such work should be useful, entailing possibly the production of some of the goods and services needed by young people themselves and other unemployed persons. Civilian Conservation Corps and National Youth Administration activities should be continued and enlarged to serve more fully the purposes for which these agencies were created. There should be further experimentation in part-time work and part-time schooling.

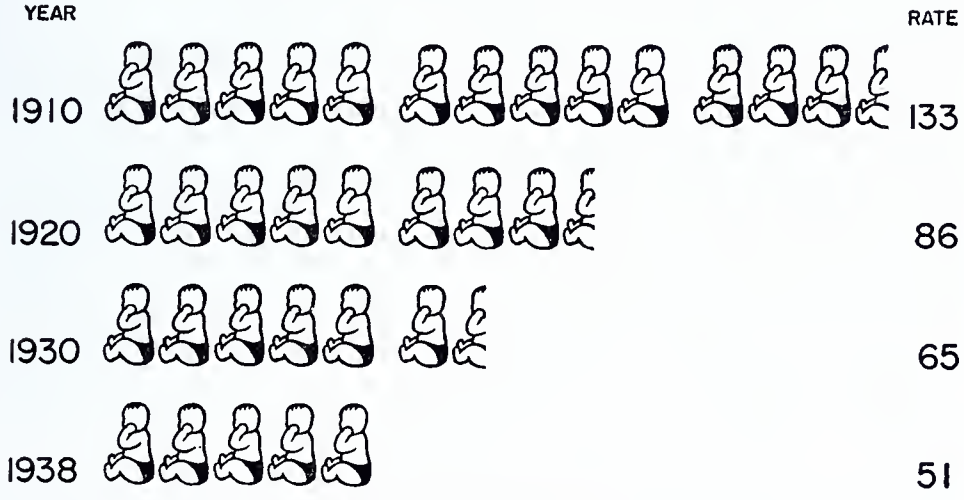
No person should be arbitrarily excluded from work programs or other programs for youth because of a delinquency record.

Conserving the Health of Children

Medical science has made notable progress during the past decade in knowledge of how to reduce illness and deaths of mothers in childbirth, how to prevent deaths of infants, and how to feed and protect the child during the first critical years of his life. Knowledge of how to immunize children against

Chart 4

INFANT MORTALITY IN THE UNITED STATES



Each symbol represents 10 deaths per 1,000 live births.
Source: Reports of the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

certain diseases of childhood has increased, as has better understanding of nutrition. New chemicals have been discovered to treat some of the diseases that have taken a heavy toll of child life in the past. The close relation between physical and mental health has been emphasized and this relationship is being brought home to parents, to the benefit of child and family.

The progress achieved during the present century in reduction of the infant death rate is shown in chart 4.

The Two Fronts

There are two great fronts in the preservation of health and treatment of disease, whether we speak of adult or child. On the one front general measures are applied to prevent well people from becoming ill; on the other, patients are treated to restore them to health and to limit the spread of disease. On both fronts organization and administration are needed, as well as technical knowledge, in medicine and in kindred sciences. Otherwise knowledge is sterile; and we already know more than we actually put to use.

General preventive measures are of many kinds. Some are almost impersonal, like control of water supply, safe sewage disposal, and sanitary inspection. In these doctor and patient are not directly involved. Other measures do involve medical practitioners, doctor, dentist, and nurse, even though there is no patient yet to treat. Among these are immunization and the prevention of diseases due to nutritional deficiency. Diphtheria and smallpox as dread menaces of childhood are rapidly diminishing through immunization; improved nutrition is gradually reducing the high incidence of rickets, scurvy, and pellagra. Many individuals with tuberculosis are discovered by such methods as large-scale testing of adolescents before the disease passes beyond easy control. Akin to this type of preventive work is health education, whether by routine health and dental supervision by physician, dentist, and nurse or by lectures, demonstrations, publications, school instruction, or other means of public information. Preventive measures are communicated, person to person, by those having professional responsibilities. The participation of the general public converts this information into health measures.

When illness strikes, the patient becomes the center of attention and recovery the immediate goal. "Medical care" then takes a prior place to prevention and public-health administra-

tion. Yet even here prevention and administration continue to be important. In most communicable diseases the treatment of the patient cannot be divorced from control of their spread. In diphtheria, tuberculosis, or syphilis the patient is also the spreader of disease, and treatment goes hand in hand with control and prevention. It is impossible, for example, to deal with tuberculosis as a public-health problem without caring for the tuberculous patient as a sick person seeking recovery. The physician who applies splints to a child's leg in the early stages of an attack of infantile paralysis is practicing preventive as well as curative medicine. Much of the most effective education of the general public is achieved through the instruction in hygiene that is given to patient and family by doctor, nurse, and medical institution.

All this may be said with especial force and pertinence of the child, whose health from before his birth and through his adolescence depends as much on general public-health measures and health education of the mother as it does on medical and nursing supervision, immunization, and preventive treatment in the home, at school, and in general community life.

Conditions Favoring Child Health

A health program for the American child during the coming decades will have important new assets. For example, we know more about the health, growth, and development of the child than ever before. Therefore our practical objectives are higher, particularly as to nutrition, protection from infection, and preventive care of sight, hearing, teeth, and so forth. We know how far we have advanced but also how far we lag behind in the application of available medical knowledge, especially in the less favored parts of the country and among certain groups of the population. There are resources that can be more fully drawn upon for child health: school, clinic,

health department, hospital, physicians, dentists, nurses, nutritionists, teachers, and social workers especially trained in child care. These are available through local, State, and Federal governments and to some extent through private agencies.

Another factor favorable to the health and general welfare of the child has been a great improvement in public health. The preservation of many adults from preventable disability and death has held together hundreds of thousands of families and kept intact homes for numbers of children who would otherwise have been orphaned or exposed to serious deprivations. No other achievement is so significant in this connection as the prevention of death and disability from tuberculosis. This disease picks off especially persons in the prime of life, when as earners and housewives they are the mainstays of the family. There were 31,000 fewer deaths from tuberculosis in 1938 than in 1928 in the United States. Sixty percent of this saving of lives represents persons between 20 and 45 years of age. It should also be noted that the maternal death rate declined from 69 per 10,000 births in 1928 to 44 in 1938. Thus are the parents of many children spared and many homes preserved.

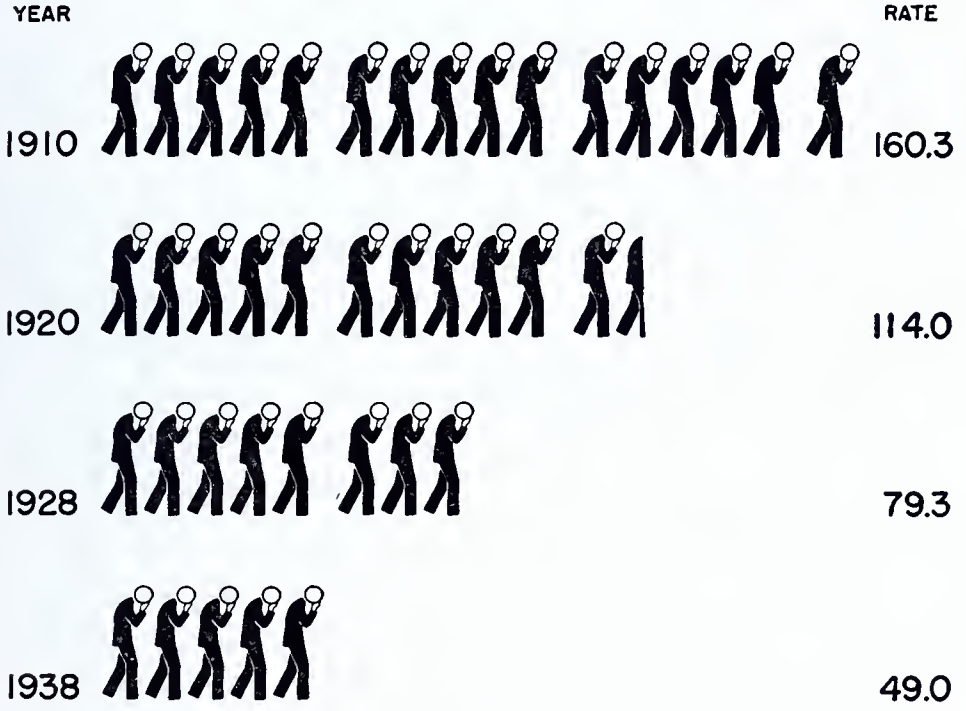
Chart 5 shows the decline in the death rate from tuberculosis among persons of all ages since 1910.

The steady development of medical science and of public-health administration is opening up new and important areas of prevention of illness and mortality among adults. Most important perhaps is the recent vigorous Nation-wide movement for the control of syphilis, which has taken on larger proportions in a brief period than any other similar movement. More recent and less advanced, but extremely important, is the effort to apply newly acquired knowledge to the control of pneumonia. This effort is already bearing demonstrable and even notable results. The means for the control of cancer are

still limited in range and type, but promise tangible results in the avoidance or postponement of deaths from cancer of certain types. All these health movements are in reality protectors of families and their children.

Chart 5

MORTALITY FROM TUBERCULOSIS, 1910–38; UNITED STATES



Each symbol represents 10 deaths per 100,000 population.
Source: Reports of the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

Objectives for the Coming Decade

At different stages in the growth of the modern public-health movement emphasis was given to different goals or measures. Today the real dangers to the health of America are not plague, cholera, and yellow fever. In preserving the health and safety of the child attention today is concentrated largely on the following objectives:

Reduction in maternal deaths.—Since the mother is the most important protector of the child's health, she requires care before, during, and after childbirth. Each year until very

recently some 14,000 mothers have died from conditions directly due to pregnancy and childbirth, despite remarkable progress in obstetric science and skills and in public-health measures. In the past few years a substantial improvement has been made in this respect; but in 1938 there were still nearly 10,000 maternal deaths, and there is urgent need for improved care in many areas. The decline in the rate for the Nation as a whole masks rates for certain States that are two or three times as high as the lowest.[20] It is estimated that at least one-half of these maternal deaths are preventable.

Reduction in deaths of infants.—Notwithstanding the progress that has been made in reducing mortality in the first year of life, there are still each year some 50,000 deaths of infants in the second to twelfth month of life, of which many are preventable. There has been but slight decline in the death rate of infants under 1 month of age, and no decline in the death rate on the first day of life. There are still some 75,000 stillbirths each year, and 70,000 deaths of infants before they are a month old.[20] One-third of the deaths of young infants and a considerable proportion of the stillbirths are believed to be preventable.

Provision of doctors and nurses.—Sufficient qualified professional care is not available to meet the needs of the American people, and the distribution of such care is uneven among geographical areas and economic strata of the people. A few favored urban areas are well supplied. Many rural areas are most inadequately provided with doctors, dentists, and nurses; some are practically without access to their services. Each year nearly a quarter of a million mothers are not attended by a physician at childbirth; about a quarter of a million newborn babies lack the benefit of medical care in the first, most critical days of life.[20] In thousands of homes no skilled nurse

[20] U. S. Bureau of the Census: Vital Statistics, Special Reports.

is available to help the physician at childbirth. This situation continues beyond childbirth. Lack of medical attention among children is reported in illnesses due to acute communicable and respiratory diseases which disable the child for a week or longer. The proportion of such illnesses not receiving medical treatment varies in different economic groups and sizes of communities from one-fifth to three-fifths.[21] Figures are available showing that for lack of prompt and competent medical attention hundreds of thousands of children suffer from correctible deficiencies of sight, hearing, teeth, and mouth formation, and from aftereffects of disabling diseases.

Deficiencies in individual medical care are paralleled by lack of hospitals and clinics. In an astoundingly large portion of the country, especially in rural areas and small communities, there are no readily available hospital or out-patient clinic facilities for mother or child.

Many of the causes of this serious situation are economic in nature. The health of the majority of persons is purchasable, and many families are able from their own resources to provide the necessary care for their children. But a larger number cannot afford to do so; the population in many areas cannot support doctor and nurse; communities of limited size and means cannot afford hospitals, clinics, and competent personnel for health administration. The remedy is, in the main, to direct a suitable portion of the Nation's resources to areas where unmet needs are great.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. The health and well-being of children depend to a large extent upon the health of all the members of their families. Preventive and curative health service and medical care should be made available to the entire

[21] *The Disabling Diseases of Childhood*, by Dorothy F. Holland. American Journal of Diseases of Children, Vol. 58, No. 6 (December 1939), pp. 1157–1185.

population, rural and urban, in all parts of the country. A considerable portion of the population is able to obtain from its own resources all or part of the necessary medical service. Another large section of the population, however, consists of families whose incomes are below the level at which they can reasonably be expected to budget all the varying costs of illness without interfering with the provision of other items essential to the family's health and welfare; for these there should be available adequately supervised medical and dental care through a program financed by general tax funds, social-insurance systems, or such combination of methods as may be best suited to local conditions.

To achieve these ends will require expansion of full-time local public-health services organized on a city, county, or district basis; construction and adequate support of health centers and hospitals as needed, especially in rural areas, and more effective use of existing medical services and facilities; more effective coordination of community public-health and medical services conducted by various agencies, public and private.

2. For all women during maternity and for all newborn infants, complete service for maternity care and care of newborn infants should be available through private resources or public funds. Such service involves—

Care of the mother throughout pregnancy, including the service of a qualified physician, of a public-health nurse, preferably one with training in obstetric care and care of newborn infants, and of a dentist, and nutrition service and social service when needed.

Care at delivery by a qualified physician, aided by a nurse trained and experienced in delivery nursing care, or such care as may be given by qualified and appropriately supervised nurse-midwife services when care by a physician is not available.

Obstetric and pediatric consultation service when needed to aid general practitioners in their care of mothers and infants.

Hospital care, as necessary, in an approved hospital provided with obstetric and pediatric consulting staff, isolation facilities for infectious patients, and facilities for care of emergency or complicated cases, for transportation, and for social service.

After the birth of the child medical and nursing care for the mother in home, hospital, or clinic; supervision of nutrition of the nursing mother; and medical and nursing supervision of the newborn infant.

3. For all infants and children preventive and curative medical services should be available, including adequate means for control of communicable disease. These services, financed through private resources or public funds, include—

The supervision of health and development of infant and child at stated intervals throughout the period of growth, and care by qualified physician and public-health nurse when needed, at home, in child-health conferences, in schools, and in physicians' offices, including preventive dentistry by qualified dentists for children of preschool and school age and social services as needed.

Health instruction in schools and health education of parents in methods of conserving both physical and mental health.

More intensive and widespread programs of safety education.

Effective nutrition services.

Mental-health service when needed.

Medical care for sick children in home, clinic, or office of qualified physician. Facilities should be available

for expert diagnosis and care of sick children, for consultation by pediatricians in appropriately organized diagnostic and treatment clinics, and for social services as needed.

Hospital care, as necessary, in an approved hospital provided with pediatric consulting staff and separate wards for children; convalescent care, as necessary for medical, social, or economic reasons, for children in need of prolonged care to restore health and fit them for family life and community life.

4. In the sharing of responsibility for public maternal and child-health services by local communities, States, and the Federal Government, the following principles should be observed:

The local community should provide maternity care and health and medical services for children, as needed, as part of its public-health responsibility, utilizing available qualified services and facilities.

The State should give leadership, financial assistance, specialized service, and supervision in the development of local services, and should be responsible for setting standards of care and service acceptable on a State-wide basis.

The Federal Government should assist States through financial support, research, and consultation service, and should be responsible for setting standards of care and service acceptable on a Nation-wide basis.

Federal grants to the States for the expansion of maternal and child-health services, including hospital and medical care, should be made on a basis that will raise most effectively the level of service in those areas where it is not adequate and so reduce existing inequalities in these fields of service.

5. In recognition of the fundamental importance of nutrition to the health of children, the President is re-

quested to appoint a national nutrition committee composed of physicians and other scientists, economists, agricultural experts, consumers' representatives, teachers, and administrators. Such a committee should review our present knowledge, coordinate the various efforts now being made to improve nutrition, and point the way toward a national policy in this field.

6. A broad program of education to enlighten citizens in all the aspects of the program of health and medical services for mothers and children is a fundamental necessity.

Because of the primary importance of personnel training and of research, the Conference urges special emphasis on the following recommendations:

7. In undergraduate professional schools and graduate curricula the training of personnel to develop and carry on maternal and child health is a major problem. Special provision should be made for training such personnel.

8. Particular training should be given to nurse-midwives to prepare them for work in remote rural areas, under the supervision of physicians qualified for this purpose.

9. Adequate support should be given to research as well as to direct service through public appropriation and private grants, since research underlies all advance in practical programs of health and medical care, including dental health for mothers and children. The results of research may markedly reduce the costs of care.

Children Under Special Disadvantages

A true concern for all children must take into account the fact that many of them labor under heavy handicaps in competition with their fellows. In some rural areas the majority of children are handicapped in this sense. To meet the needs of these children it is important to extend activities in housing, education, recreation, libraries, economic security, health, and medical care, and to adapt many of them to rural conditions.

It is fortunate that in the face of an appalling increase in destitution among the families of the Nation during the depression, local, State, and Federal governments have assumed responsibility for economic aid to families to an extent not known before in our country's history. That children generally have not suffered serious conditions of starvation or disease has been due, above all, to the acceptance of responsibility for their assistance by governmental agencies.

Social Services for Children

In smaller numbers children suffer from many types of handicap within the family, or in their own mental or physical development, which require special attention. Argument is no longer necessary to convince the American public that society as a whole has the responsibility of providing for children to the extent that their natural guardians are unable to give them adequate care and protection. Authority for such social protection is found generally in legislation, but inadequate personnel and facilities have greatly limited its effectiveness.

Certain physical and mental handicaps, such as defective vision or hearing, crippling conditions, and mental deficiency,

are the more obvious disabilities. State and local governments, with Federal aid for the care of crippled children, are providing adequate physical, educational, and social care for many handicapped children, but others still remain without such services as would prepare them for a full or partial sharing in community living on equal terms with their fellows.

Children whose handicaps are less tangible—arising from unhappy or disrupted family relationships, or emotional and psychological disturbances—need to be discovered, studied, and treated according to their needs, within their own homes if possible. Until recent years society has made little public provision for social services to children that will reach them in their own homes before their difficulties have become serious or have led to grave consequences. Recently provisions of the Social Security Act and other Federal and State legislation have served as a foundation for the introduction or extension of services of this type in close cooperation with other community measures, whether under public or under private auspices.

This Conference recognizes that in a democracy responsibility for the care of children centers in the family. Social services furnish the means by which society helps to meet the special needs of children whose well-being cannot be fully assured by their families and by those community services that are intended for all children alike. The primary objective of child-welfare service is to provide for every child who has some special need whatever assistance and guidance may be required to assure him security and protection, within his own home if possible, and opportunity for his growth and development.

To attain this objective the Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. Social services to children whose home conditions or individual difficulties require special attention should be provided in every county or other appropriate area. An obligation rests upon both public and private agencies for the development of adequate resources and standards of service. This should apply not only to agencies dealing specifically with child welfare but also to any organization whose work affects children.

2. The local public-welfare department should be able to provide all essential social services to children, either directly or through utilizing the resources of other agencies. Public and private child-welfare agencies should cooperate in a program which will assure the proper service to every child in need. Child-welfare services should be based on the following principles:

Public child-welfare services should be available to every child in need of such help without regard to legal residence, economic status, race, or any consideration other than the child's need.

Public-welfare agencies should assume continuing responsibility for children received into their care as long as they are in need of public protection or support.

Children should be given whatever service they need from public-welfare agencies without court commitment, unless change of legal custody or guardianship is involved, or legal action is needed because of the circumstances of the parents' neglect or the child's delinquency.

Public child-welfare services should be provided as part of general public-welfare administration, which should also include aid to dependent children and general relief.

For children who require care away from their own homes, there should be available such types of family-home and institutional provision as may be necessary to insure their proper care, having due regard for special handicaps and problems of adjustment. Child-caring agencies and institutions should have adequate

funds for the maintenance of children, and also for such services as are required to meet their physical, emotional, educational, and religious needs, utilizing to the fullest extent community resources available for these purposes.

Where public funds are paid to private agencies and institutions, they should be given only in payment for care of individual children whose admission to service has been approved by the public agency and who remain its responsibility. Such payments should be made on a per-capita, per-diem basis and should cover as nearly as possible maintenance costs. If service is needed by the family while the child is in foster care, there should be a definite understanding between the public-welfare department and the private agency as to which is to render such service.

3. It is the function of the juvenile court to provide legal action based on social study, with a view to social treatment, in cases of delinquency requiring court action and in cases involving adjudication of custody and guardianship or enforcement of responsibilities of adults toward children. As local public-welfare departments become equipped for adequate child-welfare service, juvenile courts should be relieved of cases not coming within these classes.

Courts dealing with children's cases should have judges and social-service staff qualified to give adequate services to children. In the larger communities a probation staff of qualified workers is required. In less populous areas the court may use the services of child-welfare workers in the public-welfare department.

Social service is needed in connection with court action in cases of delinquency and neglect and in many cases of other types. Social investigation and service, for example, are necessary in cases of divorce and legal separation when custody or responsibility for the support of children must be adjudicated; in cases of adoption, of determination of

paternity and support of children born out of wedlock, and of desertion and nonsupport of families. Where jurisdiction over these cases is not placed in the juvenile court, such service should be supplied either by the court having jurisdiction or through cooperative arrangements with the juvenile court or community welfare agencies.

4. The State welfare department should provide leadership in developing State and local services for children and in improving standards of care, and should administer such services as cannot be provided appropriately in local units. It should have a division responsible for promoting the interests and welfare of children and a definite appropriation for this purpose. Besides general promotion and leadership, the service for children provided by the department should include State financial assistance to local units of government to enable them to undertake preventive measures and, when necessary, service to children, and to reduce prevailing inequalities in local community services.

5. The Federal Government should enlarge its child-welfare activities so as to make them more fully available to the States, and through the States to local units of government, and to private child-welfare agencies and parents.

These activities should include publication of child-welfare information; research; advisory service to authorities and agencies responsible for developing and administering child-welfare programs; leadership and funds for demonstration of service and development of methods of administration; and grants to States for assistance to needy children in their own homes and for such other forms of service to children in need of special protection as experience may prove to be necessary.

6. Community, State, and Federal child-welfare services should be developed on the basis of careful planning participated in by health, educational, and social-service agencies, public and private, and by representative citi-

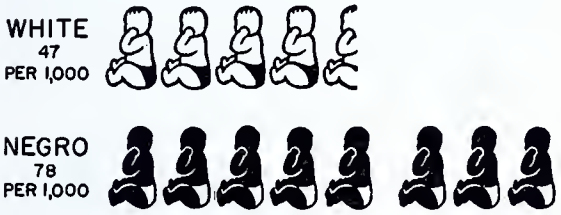
zens. Interdepartmental cooperation in the administration of these programs should be developed by Federal, State, and local governments.

Children in Minority Groups

The children in families of minority groups often suffer several types of handicaps. Their parents have less chance for employment and economic advancement; they experience a degree of social exclusion; they may receive an unequal share in public and private services: school, recreation, medical care, and welfare service. The largest minority group and the greatest sufferers from discrimination are Negroes, but minority status is also experienced to a degree which varies from time to time and from place to place by Indians, Mexicans, Jews, and some foreign-born people. There are about 5 million native-born children under 16 years of age in the United States who are other than white, and about 8 million children who are of foreign-born or mixed parentage.

Chart 6

WHO ARE THE BABIES THAT DIE?



Each symbol represents 10 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1938.
Source: Reports of the U. S. Bureau of the Census.

One of the disadvantages suffered by Negro children is strikingly illustrated in chart 6, showing the high infant death rate among Negroes in comparison with the infant death rate among white children.

Science has made it clear that strict race lines cannot be drawn and also that no factual basis exists for any assumption

that one race is superior to another. The reasons for prejudice and discrimination must, therefore, be sought mainly in social and economic rather than in biological factors. The problem is a large one quantitatively in the United States and one which must be met if we are to give all children reasonable opportunity for health and happiness.

The educational program for reducing inequalities of the minority groups will of necessity be of long duration. It will be based on the conviction, held by this Conference, that the denial of opportunity to any child on the basis of race, color, or creed is undemocratic and is dangerous to the welfare of all children. The effort to eliminate race prejudice and accompanying discrimination must be made in home and school, local and national organizations, public and private agencies.

The effort to obtain equality of opportunity for children without regard to race, color, or creed should be pursued in the places and institutions that have potentially the greatest influence upon children. The first of these is the family; parents have a particular obligation to protect and strengthen the natural tolerance of their children. Schools are next in strategic position to foster tolerance and promote cooperation. Success depends upon the attitude of the teachers in the daily life of the school. Opportunity presents itself particularly in the teaching of social sciences. We need better literature on race relations and great care in the selection of textbooks on the subject.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. Civic and social agencies, labor and consumer organizations, political parties and governmental agencies, not only should place no obstacles in the way of adequate representation and participation of minority groups both in the ranks and in administrative and policy-making

activities, but should welcome and encourage such participation.

2. In housing programs financed by Federal, State, and local governments, persons should be given equitable benefits according to need, regardless of race, creed, and color; moreover, programs should be so administered as to assure important minority groups due participation in the development and operation of housing programs.

3. Employers and labor organizations should establish outspoken policies against discrimination on grounds of race and color; anti-alien bills which exploit race prejudices should be discouraged; practices which limit the suffrage of citizens in minority groups should be corrected; and organizations deliberately exploiting race prejudice should be condemned.

4. In the local use of Federal and State grants the same standards should be applied to minority groups as to others, and this should be a specific legislative requirement enforced by public opinion and safeguarded by the right of the individual to appeal and to obtain a fair hearing.

5. The kind of protection afforded by fair labor standards legislation and certain social-insurance benefits should be provided for those engaged in agriculture and domestic service, occupations which include a large proportion of certain minority groups.

Children in Migrant Families

In recent years another group of disadvantaged children has become increasingly conspicuous—the children in migrant agricultural families. Through press, motion pictures, Government reports, and literature the plight of these families has become known to a large part of the American public. There are about one-third of a million such families in interstate migration comprising about a million persons.[22] Up to a

[22] Estimate of Farm Security Administration in *Migrant Farm Labor; the problem and ways of meeting it*, p. 1 (Washington, November 20, 1939).

decade or two ago we thought of migrant agricultural labor as a body of men following the harvest through the wheat belt from Texas to Canada, and then either returning to their homes or wintering in midwestern cities like Minneapolis, Kansas City, or Omaha. The migrant family of today represents a far different problem. It is, in a sense, today's version of the family of the covered wagon that trekked to Oregon, of the early settler who left Massachusetts to found towns in Connecticut, and of the Scotch-Irish and German families who crossed the Appalachians and helped to create some of our oldest States.

This migrant family of our day represents part of the continuous history of the development of agriculture in this country. Tenant, share-cropper, farm owner, and agricultural laborer have been "normal" patterns in agricultural occupation. Perhaps the heavily mortgaged ownership of the recent decades might be regarded as still another.

The conditions in American agriculture have been changing as a result of soil exhaustion, erosion, changes in production, and, in recent years, the introduction of industrial agriculture —that is, of large-scale farming by corporate owners. The development of cotton and fruit raising has converted part of agriculture into an intensely seasonal occupation requiring concentration of large numbers for a brief period at a given place while offering practically no employment for the rest of the year.

Under these circumstances some sections of industrial agriculture have resorted to practices that had existed in industry for many years, such as the creation of large labor reservoirs to meet increasing demands for labor, to keep wages low, and to prevent labor organization. Wholesale importation of labor from one part of the country to another has been used to augment the supply of agricultural workers and has aggra-

vated the natural difficulties inherent in the problem. Employer-employee relations tend to be in the crude stages in which labor organization is looked upon with suspicion and resentment.

It is estimated that more than half the area of the United States is involved in this migration.[23] Some of it represents places from which the migrant family was forced out by agricultural necessity; others are places affording seasonal labor to the migrant worker.

The farmer and his family forced from their land, seeking a living, and offering the labor of husband, wife, and children to the demands of industrialized agriculture confront "not a theory but a condition." They are lured to California, to Arizona, to other States, sometimes deliberately, sometimes by rumors. They exhaust their slender means in getting there. Wages tend to be low, periods of labor short, movement haphazard. The family is underfed, exposed to disease. The children do not stay in one place long enough for school; the adults do not stay long enough to exercise their rights of citizenship; conditions of housing are usually miserable, whether provided by employer or improvised into shanty towns by migrants. These families are among the best prospects for malaria and typhoid.

The migrant agricultural family is really a family, not just a group of laborers. A special study of 6,655 such families, comprising 24,485 persons in California, showed that 36 percent of these persons were children under 15 (and the majority of these under 10). Another 9 percent were between 15 and 19. These children bear the full brunt of the deprivations of migrant families. Moreover, nearly two-thirds of the children in the migrant agricultural family, as exemplified by these 6,655 studied, are in families of 5 and more persons, and even

[23] *Migrant Farm Labor*, by Frederick R. Soule, p. 4. Farm Security Administration. San Francisco, 1938.

up to 10 and more—the old-fashioned American rural family, this time on wheels instead of on their own land.[24]

To meet this complicated and deplorable situation, instances have occurred of employers acting individually as enlightened and public-spirited citizens. There has been the beginning of effective labor organization. Intelligent planning to meet the public-health problems involved has been attempted by at least one State authority, with some supervision of shelter. The Federal Government has recognized the interstate and even national aspects of the problem and has assisted in numerous ways, through the Farm Security Administration, in providing relief, housing, health service, school space, and indirectly giving protection from exploitation. To the extent that this service rescued thousands of families from starvation and disease, we have another example of the competence of this democracy to adjust its instrumentalities of government to the needs of the people.

Many studies of the problem indicate that neither the legal nor the economic problems, nor those of health and schooling for the children, can be handled by the States to which these migrants go as their exclusive burden and responsibility; that the benefits offered through labor organization are seriously retarded by the handicaps of unsympathetic employer organization and unenlightened local public opinion; that such protection against unemployment, old age, and disabling accident as has been provided for industrial employees is not available for these workers; that meanwhile close to half a million children are deprived of assurance of adequate food, clothing, shelter, education; and that these families represent on the whole farmers of excellent work habits, Americans for generations back.

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[24] *A Study of 6,655 Migrant Households in California, 1938*, pp. 53–55. Farm Security Administration. San Francisco, 1939.

The situation of the migrant agricultural family is somewhat similar to that of the pioneer of past generations. However, we now know more about the economic factors involved and have had some experience in administrative and governmental procedures for dealing with both the economic and the human problem. In the light of this perspective and experience it should be possible to plan intelligent and constructive measures. Leadership should be taken by the Federal Government, since the situation is not bounded by State lines and is part of the national agricultural problem.

The problem of the migrant family is national in scope. But shelter, education for children, health supervision, and medical care must be made available locally wherever and whenever needed. A plan that will assure migrant families and their children essential minimum provisions for their well-being must place administrative and financial responsibilities where they belong, and must assure the availability of services and facilities wherever such families may need them.

It is recommended, therefore, that the Federal Government accept responsibility for the development of an inclusive plan for care of migrant families. Such a plan should be based on the following principles:

1. Financial responsibility for interstate migrants should lie with the Federal Government, since local public opinion and existing settlement laws and other statutes deny assistance or community services to many migrant families. In the actual provision of such facilities and services the Federal Government should operate through State and local authorities wherever practicable, but should take direct responsibility for their operation whenever necessary.

2. State and local governments should take financial and administrative responsibility for families that migrate within State boundaries. Actually groups of migrant fam-

ilies often include both interstate and intrastate migrants. In the provision of services, therefore, Federal, State, and local governments should work out cooperative plans which will assure the provision of services to families when needed, regardless of where ultimate financial responsibility may lie.

3. Government employment services should take responsibility for the orderly guidance of migrant labor in seasonal employment in agriculture and other occupations.

4. Plans for the employment of migrant families should take into account the desire for resettlement of those families for which seasonal labor is only a makeshift and whose primary desire is to carry on independent farming operations.

5. To deal with the more immediate and also the continuing problems of agricultural workers and their families, which constitute at present the majority of migrant families, it is desirable that measures relating to wages and hours, collective bargaining, and social security be extended as soon as practicable to all agricultural labor, with such adaptations as may be necessary to meet their needs.

6. Housing and sanitary regulations should be made applicable to the shelter of migratory and seasonal labor, and adequate appropriations and personnel should be made available to the appropriate agencies to enforce these regulations.

7. Long-range measures that may prevent families from becoming migrants should be introduced both in agriculture and in industry—in agriculture, by such means as preventing soil erosion and soil exhaustion, and helping farmers to meet technological changes and difficulties of financing operations; in industry, by measures to offset technical and economic changes that result in communities being stranded because of permanent discontinuance of local industries.

Public Administration and Financing

Readers of this report will be struck by the frequency with which recommendations suggest changes in the administrative and financial responsibilities of local, State, and Federal governments. The present division of responsibilities is based not on existing needs but largely on conditions of colonial origin and pioneer days, when isolation made government and community services practicable only on a local basis. Towns, counties, and school districts as government units became the general pattern. Their existence was perpetuated and extended in Territorial and State governments. Later State legislation increased the number of these units by permitting subdivision of counties and townships and incorporation of towns, villages, boroughs, and cities. Functions of public health, education, and relief were left for the most part with the local units.

Size of Administrative Units

A study by the Public Administration Service in 1931–32 showed that there were more than 175,000 governmental units for various purposes in the United States.[25]

	Number of units
Counties (in 46 States) and parishes (in 1 State)	3,053
"Towns" and townships (in 23 States)	20,262
Incorporated places	16,366
School districts	127,108
Other units	8,580

Some reduction in these numbers has occurred, especially through consolidation of school districts, but there are still more than 120,000 units for school administration.

[25] *The Units of Government in the United States*, by William Anderson, p. 1. Public Administration Service Publication No. 42. Chicago, 1934.

There would be nothing inherently wrong in this system if each unit were administratively and financially capable of providing adequate service in the several functions left to the local governments. A few simple facts about these units show how futile such an expectation must be. For example, the average area of counties is 334 square miles in Kentucky and 8,129 in Arizona. There are some counties with more population than whole States or even a group of States; other counties have fewer inhabitants than some townships. More than four-fifths of the cities, villages, and boroughs of the United States had less than 2,500 population in 1930. Yet these places often had separate authority over public health, relief, education, and so forth. Hundreds of townships have fewer than 100 inhabitants.[26]

Sharing of Financial Responsibility

To the technical and administrative difficulties of conducting complicated public services under such circumstances must be added the overwhelming difficulty of financial support. Beneficial and necessary services, appropriate to modern scientific knowledge and possibilities, require a large expansion of the field of public operations. But the traditional tax system, which places the major burden of local taxation on real estate, is obviously not adapted to carry any such load in a country where a large proportion of private incomes is derived from industrial activities that are not reached by real-estate taxation. The difficulty is accentuated in areas where local income from all sources is inadequate to cover the necessary services, especially as such areas commonly have a disproportionately large child population. The adjustments required consist chiefly in methods for transferring the increased tax burden from real estate to other tax resources more

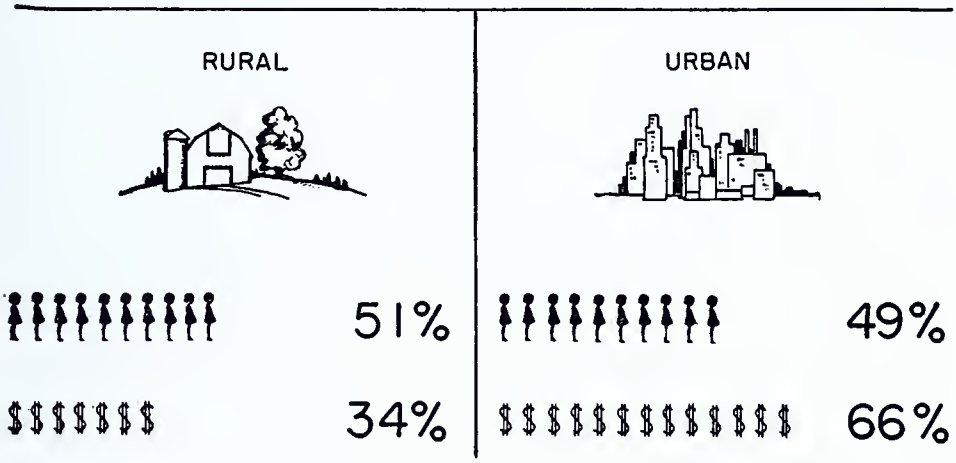
[26] Ibid., pp. 17, 20, 21.

directly connected with actual economic income, and therefore from local to State and Federal tax systems.

The recent Nation-wide survey of education found that well-to-do communities in several States could provide $100 or more per child as easily as some local units in the same States could provide $1 per child.[27] Yet there can be no such vast

Chart 7

CHILDREN AND INCOME, RURAL AND URBAN



Symbols represent 5 percent of the children under 16 and of the national income, respectively, in the United States.

Distribution of children based on 1930 census; income distribution based on estimates for nonrelief families in 1935-36, in *Consumer Incomes in the United States* (National Resources Committee, 1938).

difference in what needs to be spent per child if each is to get reasonable opportunities for education, economic security, and health protection. To raise the amounts needed for such opportunities many communities would have to tax themselves far too heavily.

In the fields of health services and relief the needs of the poorer communities are greater than those of other communities, but their financial resources are less. In general, the resources of rural areas are much less than those of urban areas, as is shown in chart 7.

[27] Advisory Committee on Education: *Report of the Committee*, p. 20.

The first substantial gain from State action in reducing inequalities in the availability of public funds came by State grants to local units in the field of education. The necessity of State participation in financing schools was recognized in Pennsylvania as early as 1834. There has been increasing participation of States in public-health and relief measures. By 1925 State aid to local units for these and other purposes was approximately 8 percent of local revenues. In 1935 it had reached 12 percent.[28] Federal funds transmitted through the States have had an increasing part in this State aid.

The practice of Federal grants to States began approximately 150 years ago, when land grants were made for common schools and for various educational institutions. The wisdom of this practice in the light of the economic and social history of the United States is reflected in its later extension up to the present time.

During the past 80 years expansion in Federal aid has included land-grant colleges, State forest service, agricultural-experiment stations and extension service, highways, vocational education and rehabilitation, rural sanitation, and public-health services. The greatest extension occurred during the past decade as a result of the depression. General relief, work relief, social insurance, and public assistance to certain groups are aided by Federal grants to States. The percentage of State revenues derived from Federal grants has increased, though not so greatly as appears to be the general impression.[29] In addition, the Federal Government has expended large sums within the States for such programs as Work Projects Administration, Civilian Conservation Corps, National Youth Administration, and Farm Security Administration.

[28] *Facing the Tax Problem*, p. 577. Twentieth Century Fund. New York, 1937.

[29] The *Bulletin of the Treasury Department* for August 1939 (p. 4) estimates that Federal grants to States in 1938 amounted to 14.1 percent of State tax revenues and Federal aid. *Facing the Tax Problem* (p. 576) gives this proportion for various previous years as follows: 1912, 0.9 percent; 1925, 10.9 percent; 1928, 7.8 percent; 1932, 12.5 percent.

The unequal capacities of local and State governments to carry on their functions could be dealt with in various ways. One way would be to remove certain of these functions entirely from local or State responsibility. Another way would be to aid these governments by grants from Federal funds. This Conference believes that it would be unsound to relieve governments on State and local levels from responsibility for such services as schooling, recreation, health, and medical service. It is important, however, to assure a reasonable minimum in these services and to remove inequalities so far as possible by spreading the cost. The Conference therefore endorses a consistent and well-organized system of grants by States to localities and by the Federal Government to States, for the support and expansion of certain services to children. Federal grants on a matching basis do not fully equalize either support or service. Various methods of apportioning costs have been tried. It is clear that whatever methods are used, more recognition must be given than at present to apportionment by Federal and State governments on the basis of the needs and resources of the States and of the localities within the States.

Professional Personnel and Lay Participation

In other sections of this report there are references to the need for qualified personnel to carry on the work and for an informed public to support and to give critical attention to the services rendered. Competent services to children depend in the long run on two groups of people: On the one hand, the general public who make these services possible; on the other, those employed to render the services. Many services essential to the health, education, and well-being of children have long since grown beyond the point where they can be supplied by parents and voluntary associations alone. Large and in-

creasing amounts of public funds are devoted to them, important public policies are involved, and income and taxes of citizens are affected. It is the direct concern of every person in the United States that funds should be expended with the greatest benefit. The quality and efficiency of the services and the well-being of the people receiving them depend directly on the competence of the personnel employed. To the extent, therefore, to which the selection of this personnel is invaded by partisan politics or is carried on without unremitting attention to the matter of competence, the funds of the taxpayer will be wasted and those who should be served will suffer.

The application of merit systems to the selection and retention of public employees in these fields is therefore of primary importance in making democracy an efficient instrument for public service. Although there has been encouraging progress in the application of the merit principle in Federal and State governments and in some cities, large areas of public service are still without the safeguards of this principle.

It is of the utmost importance that merit systems be adopted in administration of public service in local, State, and Federal governments. To accomplish this it is necessary that the general public remain interested and become increasingly informed with respect to the meaning and standards of these services. The lay citizen becomes more effective and more important in policy making to the extent that the operation of the services themselves is entrusted to personnel selected for competence and training. This Conference looks to a time when the body of public servants will be carefully selected and retained by reason of professional qualifications and will be backed by a strengthened and informed public opinion.

The Conference makes the following recommendations:

1. The number of local administrative units of government for health, education, and welfare should be reduced, and units sufficiently large and appropriate for efficiency and economy in performing the functions of government should be organized.

2. Financial responsibility should be shared by governments at the various levels—local, State, and Federal—taking into account the needs in the respective localities and States and the resources of these governmental units.

3. Merit systems which will assure competent personnel to perform the services essential for children should be adopted in public administration in local, State, and Federal governments.

Government by the People

Every recommendation in this report which involves public action is predicated on certain characteristics of the electorate. It is the American ideal that every adult citizen shall take intelligent part in the determination of public policy. Steady progress toward this end has been made throughout our history. However, before the ideal can achieve full reality, certain existing conditions and practices must be corrected. In the first place, limitations on suffrage through intimidation, coercion, the levying of poll taxes, and other undemocratic practices must be removed. In the second place, those who are entitled to participate in the affairs of government through the ballot and otherwise must accept the responsibility for the complete discharge of their civic obligations. In the third place, the exercise of voting privileges should rest upon knowledge of public affairs and of social and economic trends and conditions. Finally, there must be added to the universal informed exercise of the franchise a profound and continuing concern for the promotion of the general welfare and the maintenance and improvement of democratic institutions. Nothing less than this is a suitable goal for a democracy; nothing less can see our democracy through the difficult problems which confront the world.

The Conference makes the following recommendation:

Undemocratic limitations on suffrage should be removed, especially when they tend to discriminate against those in low-income groups or racial minorities. Participation in government and the exercise of civic responsibility can then become the clear obligation as well as the privilege of citizenship.

Call to Action

This Conference is convinced that the recommendations submitted in this report are essential to the well-being of the children of the United States of America. Many can be put into effect in the near future, but the Conference has not limited itself to matters susceptible of immediate action. Time will be necessary to put some of the proposals into effect. This is a program for 10 years, and some of it for a longer period. But even immediate measures require a perspective and an orientation; the larger program should be revealed in taking next steps. The Conference believes that its proposals are well within the capacities of the American people and that the economic well-being of the country will be enhanced by them. What the American people wish to do they can do.

> "Somewhere within these United States, within the past few years, was born a child who will be elected in 1980 to the most responsible office in the world, the Presidency of the United States," said Homer Folks at the first session of this Conference. "We cannot guess his name or whereabouts. He may come from any place and from any social or economic group. He may now be in the home of one of the soft-coal miners, or in the family of a sharecropper, or quite possibly in the home of one of the unemployed, or in a family migrating from the Dust Bowl, or he may be surrounded with every facility, convenience, and protection which money can buy.

> "If we could unroll the scroll of the future enough to read his name and whereabouts, how many things we would wish to have done for him, how carefully we would wish to guard his health, his surroundings, his education, his associates, his travels, his ambitions."

What is needful and useful in preparing a President for his exacting duties is true in lesser degree of any public servant and leader of men. In our democracy it is true also of every citizen who exercises the right of suffrage or carries his share of the common burden of doing the work of the world. What we might wish to do for that unknown child, the future President, we must be ready to do for every child, so that he may be ready to live a full life, satisfying to himself and useful to his community and Nation.

This document is a call to action: to do now those things that can be done now and to plan those that must be left for the morrow. But whether today or tomorrow, action is possible only if we have faith in the goals to be reached.

The White House Conference on Children in a Democracy holds these to be the convictions of the American people:

> That democracy can flourish only as citizens have faith in the integrity of their fellow men and capacity to cooperate with them in advancing the ends of personal and social living.
>
> That such faith and such capacity can best be established in childhood and within the family circle. Here the child should find affection which gives self-confidence, community of interest which induces cooperation, ethical values which influence conduct. Secure family life is the foundation of individual happiness and social well-being.

> That even in infancy, and increasingly in later years, the welfare of the child depends not alone upon the care provided within the family, but also upon the safeguards and services provided by community, State, and Nation.

Recognizing the immediate necessity for providing against the material dangers of the moment, this Conference is impressed also with the equal necessity for maintaining internal strength and confidence among the people of the strongest democracy in the world. If the American people, in a world showing many signs of break-down, can present a picture of a Nation devoting thought and resources to building for the distant future, we shall strengthen by these very actions our own faith in our democracy.

Holding these convictions and recognizing them as our common heritage, the Conference pledges its members and calls upon all other citizens to press forward in the next 10 years to the more complete realization of those goals for American childhood which have become increasingly well-defined from decade to decade and to which the foregoing pages have given expression.

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